



David Moschella says blogs, wikis, iPods and browser-based apps are making inroads into corporate IT.

Breaches at the VA and other agencies prompt calls for security reviews.

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## Curtain Closing On Gates Era At Microsoft

IT managers say transition plan has benefits, pitfalls

BY HEATHER HAVENSTEIN  
AND CAROL SLIWA

After Microsoft Corp. said last week that Bill Gates will step away from a day-to-day role at the company over the next two years, users lauded his contributions to Microsoft and the IT industry. But many said they think the change could be positive for Microsoft as it maneuvers to fend off competition from Google Inc., Linux vendors and other emerging rivals.

For example, Christopher Wanko, a lead systems analyst at Schering-Plough Corp. in Kenilworth, N.J., described the transition plan as "absolutely good news" for Microsoft. It comes "at a time when the old Gates, page 16

Ozzie sees IT role for 'Live' services; users are unsure

BY CAROL SLIWA  
BOSTON

Just days before he succeeded Bill Gates as Microsoft Corp.'s chief software architect, Ray Ozzie last week heralded a new era of "services disruption"

that he claimed will transform the way enterprise IT infrastructures and business systems are designed, deployed, managed and used.

But the attempt by Ozzie, then Microsoft's chief technical officer, to spin a corporate IT angle for the company's

Internet-based "Live" services strategy failed to strike a uniformly resonant chord. IT professionals at Microsoft's TechEd 2006 conference here were mixed on whether they Microsoft Live, page 92

**Q**  
The old school needs to become a hallowed memory.

## COMPUTERWORLD 100 BEST PLACES TO WORK IN IT 2006



**SPECIAL  
REPORT**

Technologists at these

choice workplaces are full-fledged partners in the business while earning tip-top pay and perks. What's more, results of a survey of 27,108 IT workers at these companies show job security is on the rise. **Page 27**

**Web You Worked There?** Use our interactive chart to find a company that fits your premises.  
[www.computerworld.com/100/interactive](http://www.computerworld.com/100/interactive)



THE  
Top  
Five

- 1
- 2
- 3
- 4
- 5

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**WebSphere**

\_INFRASTRUCTURE LOG

\_DAY 8: I give up. Our infrastructure is so inflexible. Our apps and processes don't work together. We can't respond quickly to change. It's out of control.

\_Gil had an epiphany. Duct tape. A few dozen rolls later and he's integrated everything, and everyone, by hand.

\_DAY 10: Duct tape can fix many things. Basketballs. Sofas. Doorknobs. But not widespread app and process inflexibility.

\_DAY 13: I've found something better: IBM WebSphere middleware. It'll make our infrastructure more flexible by seamlessly integrating our apps. We can change processes in a snap and use what we already have—even apps from SAP and Oracle. And with IBM's industry-specific expertise, we're on our way to enabling a service oriented architecture.

\_Hmmm...WebSphere. More powerful than duct tape.

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## COMPUTERWORLD 100 BEST PLACES TO WORK IN IT

### SPECIAL REPORT

Technologists at this year's Best Places

to Work in IT are recognized as creators and co-workers, too, with lives outside the office. When they ask for changes, propose ideas and give their feedback, their companies listen — and act. **Package begins on page 27.**

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**Tech for the Techies.** At Best Places, IT employees jockey for leading-edge technology projects. But who's keeping the lights on?

**Brain Trust.** These Best Places keep smart staffers content and secure by feeding their minds and avoiding the urge to overhire.

**Business 101.** Best Places keep staffers' business skills as sharp as their tech smarts with job rotations and mentoring.

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The following resources can be found at [computerworld.com/100/bestplaces](http://computerworld.com/100/bestplaces):

**Work. You. Worried. There?** Find the company that best fits your priorities, with our sortable chart. Identify the top companies for diversity, training, benefits and other factors. Plus, our by region.

**A Cheaper Look.** View the top benefits and retention methods at the 100 Best Places, plus check out statistics on future hiring and training budgets. Survey results from IT workers at the top 100 companies show satisfaction ratings for bonuses, salaries, management, training and other factors.



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# 100 BEST PLACES TO WORK IN IT 2006

### Inside the Top Five



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A Career Guide. View the top benefits and salaries available at the 100 Best Places, plus check out statistics on how long and how long. Survey results show IT workers at the top 100 companies share satisfaction ratings for benefits, salaries, management, training and other factors.

\_INFRASTRUCTURE LOG

**IBM.**

\_DAY 19: The business is, uh, coming apart. I.T. isn't in sync with the suits. No one's sure what they need to do. It's totally out of control.

\_DAY 20: Gil fell into the crack. Maintenance is on it.

\_DAY 24: I've got it. IBM Rational. A modular platform that lets us govern the entire development process and align it with our business goals. Now everyone's on the same page. Plus, we can ensure our software's in compliance and implement a service oriented architecture.

\_Everyone's glad the crack is gone. Gil says his nightmares about "the dark place" are practically over.



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IBM

\_INFRASTRUCTURE LOG

\_DAY 49: Things are out of control. Our system is just not secure, flexible or reliable enough. G11 bought some "infrastructure bloodhounds" online. He says they can sniff out any problem.

\_DAY 50: They can't. But IBM Tivoli Express middleware can. It's a series of I.T. management solutions designed and priced for mid-sized businesses. Secure, boosts uptime, and protects our data with automated backups. We even got help customizing and implementing it.

\_DAY 52: Remind G11: Bloodhounds not as good at sniffing out problems as they are at chewing Ethernet cables.

**Tivoli Express**

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**IBM.COM/TAKEBACKCONTROL/SIMPLE**

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# ROI Key to Melding BI, Business Processes

Such efforts also require significant business user input

BY HEATHER HAVENSTEIN  
NEW YORK

**E**MELDING BUSINESS intelligence into operational processes can help workers make better decisions, but such IT initiatives must be designed with the help of business users and quickly show a significant return on investment.

Several users with experience building such systems offered that advice at IDC's Business Intelligence and Business Process Forum here last week. All of the users said they have launched projects to infuse business processes with analytics to allow front-line workers to use exception handling to make decisions.

At Capital One Financial Corp., intelligent process automation or operational BI projects focus on high-level strategic areas such as cost cutting or outsourcing to ensure ROI, said David Hummelberg, managing vice president of IT at the McLean, Va.-based financial services firm.

In general, he said, "the value proposition [of a BI project] is pretty foggy going into it. That is why ours have been drafted behind a specific business issue."

Capital One uses intelligent process automation to route calls to 80,000 to 15,000 call center representatives, based on capacity and volume, Hummelberg said. As a result, the company has trimmed the operational costs of its mostly outsourced centers by 12% annually over the past several years while boosting customer satisfaction, he said.

The company has also placed a call center application on the desktops of workers in its outsourced facilities. It uses analytics to determine potential cross-selling opportunities based on the demographics and previous buying patterns of callers, he said.

Wayne Sipperly, manager of energy markets analysis at the New York Power Authority, suggested that companies focus such BI projects in areas that can help meet corporate objectives and gain executive support.

The electricity supplier in White Plains, N.Y., has melded analytics and a rules engine with multiple transactional data sources to provide dashboards for its electricity traders, asset managers and executives, Sipperly said.

Since going into production in February 2005, the project has saved traders an hour per day each, yielding \$500,000 to \$1 million in annual savings for the utility, he said.

"You can't try to sell it for human resources [projects]," Sipperly advised. "You have to sell it where the dollars are."

The power authority's portal gives traders a dashboard with real-time information they can use to prepare 1,000 daily bids to buy electricity, he said. The traders base those bids on 26 sets of data from 11 sources.

Previously, "traders would end up with two screens and 20 windows open," Sipperly said. "There were no alerts, no trending capabilities. There was a heavy reliance on manual spreadsheets."

Using analytics capabilities, the dashboards help traders

create optimal trading strategies. The dashboards can also alert users by e-mail in real time if bids fall below a certain threshold required for the company to meet financial performance or plant commitments, according to Sipperly.

A key challenge to implementing the portal system, Sipperly noted, was persuading users to give up spreadsheets for automated systems.

Efforts to meld BI with business processes must include significant input from business users in addition to generating substantial ROI, said Rick Broughton, director of IT strategy at Dunkin' Brands Inc. in Canton, Mass.

Dunkin' Brands, which operates 12,000 Dunkin' Donuts

and Baskin-Robbins stores, is replacing its manual system for collecting retail data with one that ties BI data to business processes. So far, 300 users have been trained on the new system, with another 200 to be trained, Broughton said.

As IT personnel create the system, business users are being tapped as data stewards because "they know what the best data is and the source for it," he said.

One of the biggest challenges can be keeping users focused on "practical business processes," said Steve Phillips, CIO at Avnet Inc. Although access to real-time information is often associated with these projects, such a capability isn't always necessary. In fact, Phillips said, if data "can't be used in real time, it can cause unnecessary work."

## HP Develops Tool for Analyzing IT Changes

BY MATT HAMBLER

Hewlett-Packard Co. plans to announce three OpenView management tools at its software user conference in Miami Beach tomorrow, including new analytics software that is designed to run "what-if" simulations of potential changes to IT systems, operations and staffing levels.

For example, an IT manager could use the OpenView DecisionCenter 1.0 analytics tool to determine the additional personnel and IT infrastructure costs of improving server uptime inside a data center, said Bill Emmett, HP's manager of OpenView marketing.

DecisionCenter is based on technology that HP acquired when it bought Peregrine Systems Inc. last December.

Also being announced at the HP Software Forum 2006 is OpenView AssetCenter 5.0, an upgrade of a Peregrine-developed tool for managing the full life cycle of IT assets. In addition, HP will roll out OpenView Application Insight 7.0, a new version of an internally developed tool

that gives IT managers views of the dependencies among applications, servers and other devices on a network.

Mark Bradley, vice president of infrastructure at a global bank that he asked not be named, said he had worked with HP in recent months to improve the DecisionCenter tool. "So far, it is a unique product," Bradley said, adding that the analytics software is designed to help users "improve the efficiency of IT."

For example, Bradley said he has used the tool to analyze how the operations in two mirrored data centers would be affected if he moved two people to jobs outside the facilities. The analysis considered factors such as the job functions that would be lost within the data centers and whether systems maintenance work might slip and for how long.

Bradley has also used the software to generate a predictive analysis of the impact that virtualizing a group of servers would have on performance and costs. He said the bank will implement both Decision-

Center and AssetCenter after they become available in commercial releases, which is scheduled for later this year.

Unisys Corp. helped HP develop DecisionCenter following HP's acquisition of Peregrine, said Sumet Malhotra, global director of advanced research at Unisys.

Blue Bell, Pa.-based Unisys plans to resell DecisionCenter

**New Tools From HP**

### OPENVIEW DECISIONCENTER 1.0

- Analytics software designed to help users align IT installations and data center staffing with changing business needs.
- Due in September, with price starting at \$42,500.

### OPENVIEW ASSETCENTER 5.0

- Upgraded tool, originally developed by Peregrine Systems, that automates the process of managing IT assets.
- Targeted for release in Q4, priced at \$3,075 per user.

### OPENVIEW APPLICATION INSIGHT 7.0

- Monitoring, data mining, applications and underlying technology to help system administrators resolve problems.
- Expected in Q4, priced at \$2,495.

with its JD Visible Enterprise consulting program, which is designed to help users set long-term plans that include their IT infrastructure needs.

Malhotra said that the "first" version of DecisionCenter doesn't provide insight into the details and "archeology" of existing IT resources. To provide those capabilities, Unisys will supplement the HP software with its own tools and consulting services.

But DecisionCenter "still has a lot of value alone," Malhotra said, adding that Unisys has already deployed it internally and at three user organizations.

Dennis Droegseth, an analyst at Enterprise Management Associates in Boulder, Colo., said DecisionCenter "represents a big opportunity for HP."

He noted that the new tool is part of a trend in which HP and competitors BMC Software Inc., CA Inc. and IBM are offering products that bring together data about IT processes, system architectures and costs so it can be modeled and analyzed. But, Droegseth said, DecisionCenter is distinctive in its focus on using metrics to help users align IT operations with service quality and costs. ■



Users "know what the best data is and the source for it," he said.

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## BRIEFS

## Qualcomm Files Complaint vs. Nokia

Qualcomm Inc. has filed a third complaint with the U.S. International Trade Commission charging Nokia Corp. with patent infringement. In a statement, Nokia said Qualcomm likely filed the complaint to help it in renegotiating an agreement between the two firms that is set to expire early next year. Qualcomm said it expects that the USITC probe will begin next month.

## Symantec Finds Yahoo E-Mail Worm

Symantec Corp. has identified a Level 2 (elevated risk) mailer worm exploiting a vulnerability in Yahoo Inc.'s Web e-mail system. Mimicking Yahoo's QuickBuilder function, the JS.Yahoomail.worm can gather Yahoo.com and Yahoogroups.com addresses from a user's address book and send them to a central server. Users are advised to block incoming e-mail from an av39@yahoo.com address. Yahoo officials could not be reached for comment.

## CA Acquires Records Management Firm

CA Inc. has acquired records-management software and services vendor MDY Group International Inc. for an undisclosed sum. MDY's FileSurv software automates the management of physical, electronic and e-mail records and is designed to make it easier for users to comply with regulatory requirements and internal policies around data storage.

## Mobile Firms Join to Build Linux Platform

A group of major mobile phone makers and operators have announced plans to launch a foundation to create an open Linux-based software platform for mobile devices. The companies plan to create an application programming interface specification, an architecture and a source reference they hope will spur sales of Linux-based phones.

## ON THE MARK

HOT TECHNOLOGY TRENDS, NEW PRODUCT NEWS AND INDUSTRY BUZZ BY MARK HALL



## The 'Summer of Storage' Looms...

...and may leave you in crisis for seasons to come. Patrick Hynds, chief technology officer at NTP Software Inc. in Nashua, N.H., predicts that this summer could mark a turning point in the ability of large organizations to maintain control over their data storage.

"This is a very critical summer for storage," Hynds says. Why? One easy answer is regulatory compliance. "Companies keep everything now," he observes. Then there's new data-gobbling technology such as the high-definition video format, which consumes as much as 500GB for one hour of video. Corporate trainers and marketers will use HD video, and end users will be dragging USB drives loaded with holiday photos and digital home videos into the office to share with co-workers, says Hynds. "This is a wave, not a slow flood," he warns. And it's only going to get worse. For example, he expects that by 2010, business PCs will come equipped with 10TB disk drives. How will you ensure that all the vital data on those systems is backed up and secured? Hynds argues that storage administrators who think tape should be part of their backup strategies are, well, a tad old-fashioned. "To



Stay on top of storage

back up a petabyte, you'd need 1,000 TB tapes, which don't exist," he says. Hynds doesn't offer a pat answer to the problem but suggests that disk-to-disk tiered storage may be a solution for organizations with sprawling storage needs. "If you have not thought out your process for storage growth by the end of summer," he contends, "you'll be in trouble." And you thought you were going on vacation.

## The problem with people is...

...that they're human. That means they make mistakes — and how. According to consulting firm Enterprise Management Associates in Boulder, Colo., 30% to 50% of application downtime is caused by you and your IT staff, primarily from flubs in configuration and change management processes. Joe Forgiopane, CEO of Burlington, Mass.-based mValent Inc., claims that his company's

Integrity software can prevent most, if not all, human-caused downtime. Integrity lets

you create "golden master" application server configurations and apply them to appropriate servers. Forgiopane says. Bill Thornburg, mValent's vice president of product management, says Integrity also looks for "server drift," when servers are changed outside of the IT-approved process, and then reports policy violations. Integrity 4.0, which ships next week, adds a dashboard feature for tracking changes to systems. It also integrates with help desk trouble-ticketing tools from BMC Software Inc. and CA Inc. Pricing averages about \$125,000.

## Follow the data to avoid any...

...really surprises. If you know where all the structured data in your company's databases and spreadsheets went during the course of a day, you'd probably rest a bit easier. But

Todd Goldman, vice president of marketing at Exor Inc. in Santa Clara, Calif., is betting that you aren't feeling so sanguine about how data — sensitive

and otherwise — moves from application to application and machine to machine. Most IT shops don't know how that happens, Goldman says. And in an era of evil hackers and meager compliance auditors, that lack of knowledge is dangerous, he contends. Goldman says DataMapper 2.0, which will be available from Exor's early next month, can "discover how data flows through an organization." The software charts business rules and complex data transformations as information moves between programs. Perpetual licenses start at \$88,000.

## The hunt for the best 'Da Vinci' coder...

...is a mystery this contest hopes to solve. If you think you can develop the coolest real-time application on the planet, consider entering the Da Vinci Coder contest being run by StreamBase Systems Inc. in Lexington, Mass., and Advanced Micro Devices Inc. William Hobbitz, StreamBase's vice president of marketing, says there will be weekly prizes, including "the ultimate iPod bundle." The grand prizes include a trip to London and Paris or a flight in a zero-gravity plane. StreamBase is offering a free download of its data analytics software so you can work your real-time magic. Speaking of which, StreamBase 3.5, due next month, increases the software's performance so it can process more than 360,000 messages per second on a single CPU, Hobbitz says. The upgrade also adds an event engine to compare real-time data flows with historical information for applications such as detecting credit card fraud. Pricing starts at about \$100,000. ■



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# Federal Breaches Spark Security Review Push

GAO, administration officials call for look into data collection processes

BY JAIKUMAR VIJAYAN

**T**HE MASSIVE data breach disclosed last month by the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs has triggered sweeping reviews of information security policies at the VA and at several other government agencies that recently suffered smaller data losses.

And last week, officials at the Government Accountability Office and the White House Office of Management and Budget (OMB) said that federal agencies as a whole need to review their processes for collecting and storing data

and controlling access to it. The string of data breaches highlights the fact that agencies have to take a more strategic approach to guarding personal information, said Linda Koonz, director of information management issues at the GAO.

"We are believers in the notion of privacy impact assessments -- of looking at the implications of the information you are collecting and how to protect that," Koonz said in an interview after she testified at a hearing held last Wednesday by the House Committee on Veterans' Affairs.

The recent breach disclosures prompted the OMB to direct all agency heads to describe the specific steps they are taking to implement the requirements of the Federal Information Security Management Act in their annual reports on their compliance with FISMA.

"Agencies have a responsibility to ensure that they are FISMA-compliant and that their employees are trained to work with tough security measures," an OMB spokesman said. She added that the OMB has set "sound standards and policies" based on FISMA's mandates and is working with agencies "to make sure practices match these policies."

## A Stronger FISMA

Rep. Tom Davis (R-Va.), chairman of the House Committee on Government Reform, last week promised to introduce legislation seeking to strengthen breach-notification requirements at agencies. His vow followed a belated disclosure by the Department of Energy that the Social Security numbers and other personal data of about 1,500 employees and contract workers were

**Department of Veterans Affairs**  
A laptop and an external disk containing personal data on 26.5 million veterans and active-duty personnel were stolen last month from the home of a data analyst.

**Social Security Administration**  
Social Security numbers and other data on about 200 people were stored and not properly secured on an employee-owned laptop that was stolen at a conference.

**Internal Revenue Service**  
An IRS employee lost a laptop containing personal data on 201 agency workers and job applicants after checking it as luggage on an airline flight.

**Department of Energy**  
The apparent hacking of a server that took place last September but was just disclosed resulted in the potential compromise of data on less than 1,500 individuals.

compromised by a hacker last September.

In addition to the VA and the Energy Department, the Social Security Administration and the Internal Revenue Service recently acknowledged that they had been hit by data breaches (see chart).

Davis has said the recent incidents highlight the need to strengthen FISMA's requirements. At a VA-related hearing that the Government Reform Committee held on June 8, he called for the addition of unspecified penalties and incentives to foster better information-security practices.

During the same hearing, VA Secretary R. James Nicholson expanded on some of the measures the agency is taking to prevent further breaches. Among them are a complete ban on using personally owned computers and laptops to log into the agency's networks, and an indefinite

suspension of the practice of permitting VA employees to download claims files and work on them from home. Nicholson said he has also ordered a complete recall of all agency-issued laptops for a comprehensive security review by the end of this month.

The VA plans to require laptop users to submit their systems for a monthly review but has not yet decided how that will be done, a spokesman said.

Daniel Galik, chief of mission assurance and security services at the IRS, said at the June 8 hearing that the tax agency is "aggressively reviewing" information security processes after an employee lost a laptop. He added that the agency is looking for security technologies that will enable automatic encryption of all data on its laptops. The goal, he said, is to fully deploy such technologies within six months. ▀

## GAO Official Charges That VA Ignored Security Warnings



The Government Accountability Office gave VA officials several specific warnings about the agency's information security program before the massive data breach there last month, according to Linda Koonz, director of information management issues at the GAO. But the VA failed to act on the warnings, Koonz said last week at a hearing held by the House Committee on Veterans' Affairs. She spoke with Computerworld afterward about data security problems at federal agencies. Excerpts from the interview follow.

**What went wrong at the VA?**  
The inspector general has both an administrative and a criminal investigation going on, so I can't talk specifically about that. But one of the points we tried to make is that the VA has really failed to establish

a comprehensive integrated information security program.

**In your testimony, you blamed the leadership at the VA. Why?**  
Part of it has to do with the fact that the problems at the VA are very long-standing, and although [agency officials] have done something to address them, their actions have not been sufficient. I think it's natural for us to believe that they are going to bend leadership from the top to break the logjam here.

**Does the Federal Information Security Management Act need to be revised? What's the incentive for agencies to comply now?**  
The least from it to disclose is certainly enough to make any agency head think about what they are doing in this area. The thing about FISMA is that there may be some things you need to do to break it, but probably one of the bigger issues is making sure that agencies comply with what is required right now. ▀

- JAIKUMAR VIJAYAN

## MySQL Mistakenly Shares Customer E-mail Addresses

BY TODD R. WEISS

A mass e-mail sent out last week by open-source database vendor MySQL AB erroneously contained the e-mail addresses of about 9,300 customers instead of information on a series of software-support special offers that the company meant to publicize.

The error apparently occurred when a U.S.-based MySQL employee mistakenly posted the e-mail addresses of all the intended recipients into the body of the message.

In a statement confirming the incident, MySQL said it was "working on a stricter

process to prevent this from happening again in the future." The company said that it takes the privacy of its database users "very seriously."

The Upsala, Sweden-based vendor also said that it had sent a follow-up e-mail to all 9,300 affected users, apologizing for the mistake and explaining how it happened.

Robert Brown, an IT project manager and consultant in Hackettstown, N.J., said he received the errant e-mail and was flabbergasted to find so many customer e-mail addresses -- including his own. "I can understand a user er-

ror -- you know, 100 or 200 addresses," Brown said. "But more than 9,000? Come on."

Brown said he was so bothered by the incident that he called MySQL to complain.

He added that after a Computerworld reporter called the snafu, a marketing manager from the software vendor returned his call and left a message acknowledging and apologizing for the incident.

"I'm satisfied," Brown said. "Hopefully, they will implement some training to fix the original problem to stop it from happening again." ▀



# Federal Breaches Spark Security Review Push

GAO, administration officials call for look into data collection processes

BY JARUWAL VILAYAN

**T**HE MASSIVE data breach disclosed last month by the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs has triggered sweeping reviews of information security policies at the VA and at several other government agencies that recently suffered smaller data losses.

Last week, officials at the Government Accountability Office and the White House Office of Management and Budget (OMB) said that federal agencies as a whole need to review their processes for collecting and storing data

and controlling access to it.

The string of data breaches highlights the fact that agencies have to take a more strategic approach to guarding personal information, said Linda Koonce, director of information management issues at the GAO.

"We are believers in the notion of privacy impact assessments — of looking at the implications of the information you are collecting and how to protect that," Koonce said in an interview after she testified at a hearing held last Wednesday by the House Committee on Veterans' Affairs.

The recent breach disclosures prompted the OMB to direct all agency heads to describe the specific steps they are taking to implement the requirements of the Federal Information Security Management Act in their annual reports on their compliance with FISMA.

"Agencies have a responsibility to ensure that they are FISMA-compliant and that their employees are trained to work with tough security measures," an OMB spokeswoman said. She added that the OMB has set "sound standards and policies" based on FISMA's mandates and is working with agencies "to make sure practices match these policies."

## A Stronger FISMA

Rep. Tom Davis (R-Va.), chairman of the House Committee on Government Reform, last week promised to introduce legislation seeking to strengthen breach-notification requirements at agencies. His vow followed a belated disclosure by the Department of Energy that the Social Security numbers and other personal data of about 1,500 employees and contract workers were



compromised by a hacker last September.

In addition to the VA and the Energy Department, the Social Security Administration and the Internal Revenue Service recently acknowledged that they had been hit by data breaches (see chart).

Davis has said the recent incidents highlight the need to strengthen FISMA's requirements. At a VA-related hearing that the Government Reform Committee held on June 8, he called for the addition of unspecified penalties and incentives to foster better information-security practices.

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**What went wrong at the VA?**  
The Inspector General has built an administrative unit or a critical review unit, but we can't talk specifically about that. But one of the provisions that we think that the VA has really failed to establish

a comprehensive integrated information security program.

**In your testimony, you blamed the leadership at the VA. Why?**  
Part of it has to do with the fact that the problems at the VA are very long-standing, and although they are long-standing, they have done something to address them, that actions have not been sufficient. I think it's natural for us to believe that they are going to learn leadership from the VA to avoid the problem here.

**Does the Federal Information Security Management Act need to be revised?**  
What's the law for agencies to comply with? The law has a checkbox that says they are doing it. The law says that FISMA is that there may be some things you need to do to avoid it, but probably one of the biggest things is making sure that agencies comply with what is required right now.

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## BRIEFS

**AOL Starts Testing Corporate IM Tool**

AOL LLC has begun publicly testing AIM Pro Professional Edition, a version of its instant messaging service for corporate users. AIM Pro PE is expected to be launched in the third quarter. It was jointly developed with WebEx Communications Inc. AIM Pro PE includes stronger security than the consumer version, and integration with Microsoft Corp.'s Outlook software.

**IRS CIO Leaving Post to Join NIST**

Internal Revenue Service CIO W. Todd Grams is leaving to become the chief financial officer at the National Institute of Standards and Technology, the IRS disclosed. In an e-mail statement, Grams said he will work with NIST officials to support the president's American Competitiveness Initiative. He joined the IRS in February 2001 as CFO and was named CIO in 2003.

**Microsoft Forms Interoperability Unit**

Microsoft has formed a group that includes company executives and outside IT officials to discuss interoperability. The group will be led by Bob Maglia, senior vice president of Microsoft's server and tool business division, and will include CIOs and chief technology officers from Societe Generale Group, LatinMedia Group, Kohl's Department Stores Inc. and the state of Wisconsin and Delaware.

**UGS Donates \$1.1B in Software to China**

UGS Corp. plans to donate \$1.1 billion worth of its product life-cycle management software to 67 Chinese colleges and universities. Company officials said they hope to get young Chinese engineers to use the software as the country emerges as a world leader in manufacturing over the next 10 to 15 years. UGS estimated that about 45,000 students will have access to the software.

# Applebee's Taps BEA Tool to Boost Operations

## Alerts managers when performance levels fall and helps resolve problems

BY HEATHER HAVENSTEIN

**A**PPLBEE'S International Inc. this month began testing new software that it plans to roll out to its 1,850 restaurants to proactively alert managers when individual store operations deviate from set performance metrics.

The restaurant chain plans to plug BEA Systems Inc.'s AquaLogic HiPer Workspace for Retail software into its existing BEA portal to bolster communications with its restaurant managers, said Frank Ybarra, associate director of communications at the Overland Park, Kan.-based chain.

The BEA software is a composite application that can use Web services to quickly notify store managers when a restaurant isn't meeting certain performance criteria, Ybarra said. The software can also offer possible solutions to problems and provide a platform for communication with store managers, he said.

"As a company, we know that we have significant communication challenges in a very dynamic sales environment," Ybarra said. "We have constantly evolving and improving menus, [and] our [individual restaurant] operators have to have a clear understanding of how to execute those [changes]. We have a second challenge to make sure the software is focused on the same performance metrics."

Applebee's plans to begin rolling out a production version of the new application for its portal to 500 company-owned restaurants in August. Once the rollout is complete, the software will be installed in each of the company's franchise restaurants, Ybarra said.

Restaurant managers now have access to daily performance records through dashboards using the older BEA portal software, but any deviations and associated actions to fix a problem have to be generated manually, Ybarra said.

With that system, the metrics can become "a sea of information these managers are supposed to weed through every day," added Patty Catter, Applebee's IT project manager.

The new system will have an interface to the company's data warehouse that will automatically generate alerts and suggested action plans when individual restaurant performance in a specific area — like the speed of getting customers in and out of a restaurant, or customer satisfaction — falls below a threshold, he said. "It is an exception management situation," Ybarra said.



Applebee's plans to roll out retail software to its 1,850 restaurants.

# SAP Updates Global Trading App

BY MARC L. BOWEN

SAP AG last week unveiled a new version of its Global Trade Services software, which officials said can better help customers navigate through the tangle of international trading laws and procedures.

Initially released in 2002, the GTS application is used by some 250 companies to automate the processes involved in cross-border transactions, SAP said.

The latest version, GTS 7.0, is built on top of SAP's NetWeaver middleware technology, said Netin Datar, director of solutions marketing

at SAP's global risk compliance unit.

One customer, Foster City, Calif.-based life sciences firm Applied Biosystems Group, is already considering an upgrade to the new application.

Leighton Yates, senior manager for global trade compliance at Applied Biosystems, said he is interested in Version 7.0 because it supports multiple languages, including Chinese, and offers updated reporting capabilities. The company is now using an earlier version of the application.

Yates also noted that the latest version of GTS provides a trade preferences module

that can automate the process of complying with applicable regional trade agreements — a feature that could help Applied Biosystems eliminate redundant processes and save it as much as \$1 million.

**Added Features**

New features in GTS 7.0 also include the ability to automatically create letters of credit, which are commonly used in Europe and Asia, Datar said.

For example, he said that about 70% of all transactions based on letters of credit are rejected because of errors.

"It's a huge area of pain for our customers, especially

"It is extremely important to us that we minimize the amount of time our managers are spending behind a computer."

Jason Bloomberg, an analyst at ZapThink LLC in Baltimore, said that as companies increasingly move toward service-oriented architectures, their view of the role of portals are evolving.

A portal used to be seen as a browser interface to different enterprise applications that were glued together. That approach makes communication between different sections of the portal difficult, Bloomberg said, comparing the task with "taking a solid organization and putting a browser in front of it."

The updated portal, as used by Applebee's, can be viewed as a flexible interface for composite applications, he added. ■

those with outsourced manufacturing who are dealing with customers on a global basis," according to Datar.

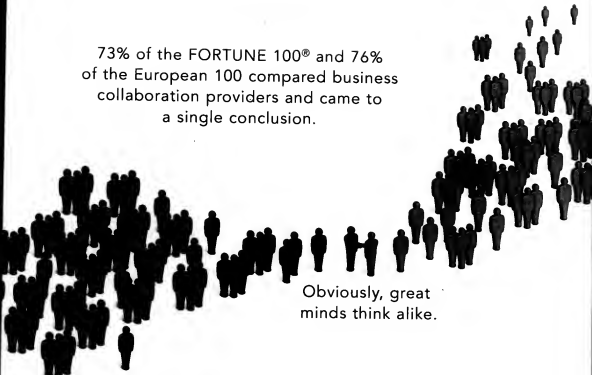
Proper standardization of the processes can boost efficiency and cut costs for users, he said.

Version 7.0 automates customers warehousing processes, which will help companies to defer or eliminate duty payments, SAP said.

In addition, GTS 7.0 supports adherence to mandatory Automated Export System filing requirements, the company said.

The latest version of GTS is available now. Pricing varies, depending on process scenarios, and takes into account transactional volumes. ■

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## Gates

school needs to become a half-loved memory, and new ideas and perspectives should come to the fore," Wanko said.

Gates is "a brilliant strategic thinker [who] revolutionized the industry," said John Halama, CEO at CareGroup Healthcare System and Harvard Medical School in Boston. "However, it's clear that Microsoft has not competed well with market innovations from Google, Linux and the next generation of thin, Web-based applications."

The software vendor "needs to transform itself, and new leaders in day-to-day operations may create opportunities for radical change," he added.

Ann Harten, vice president of global information systems at office furniture maker Haworth Inc. in Holland, Mich., noted that "a new perspective, with Bill's ongoing guidance, might be a refreshing approach" for Microsoft—particularly if the company's focus shifts to "accurate and usable [product] delivery."




### End of an Era

Not everyone among the 25 users contacted by Computerworld last week was so upbeat about Gates' plan to relinquish his role as Microsoft's chief software architect. The duties now performed by Gates will be split between Ray Ozzie and Craig Mundie, who both previously held chief technical officer jobs at the company.

Dan Agronow, chief technology officer at The Weather Channel Interactive Inc. in Atlanta, lamented the announcement as "the end of an era."

Gates is "the individual that's the embodiment of Microsoft," Agronow said. "When you think of Microsoft, you think of Bill. I think now Microsoft will be viewed more as a corporate, faceless entity, similar to IBM. I don't see that as good or bad; it's more sad."

However, Agronow predicted that the changes will likely make Microsoft even slower to respond to competitive

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threats. "I don't see them having the single strong personality that could turn the ship when needed, like when they finally recognized the threat of Netscape," he said.

Gates "is the heart and soul of that company, so I have to believe that his departure would make it something less than it was before," said Chris Hubbell, a software systems engineer at Westar Energy Inc. in Topeka, Kan. The planned transition "makes Microsoft a little less imposing" and potentially more vulnerable to competition, Hubbell said.

"Microsoft is so much Bill Gates in terms of corporate

personality," said Rob Enderle, an analyst at Enderle Group in San Jose.

But Enderle noted that Ozzie was hired last year, when he sold Groove Networks to Microsoft, with the intent that he eventually would step into Gates' role as chief software architect. Gates likely judged that Ozzie had performed in his satisfaction and that "it was a matter of pulling the trigger and letting it happen," Enderle said.

He also pointed to delays in the development of Microsoft's upcoming Windows Vista operating system as a possible contributing factor.

The Vista problems may have prompted Gates to "think it was time to make the transition," Enderle said. "Bill was a bit more distracted from the chief architect role than he should have been."

As part of the plan Microsoft announced last Thursday, Ozzie, who, like Gates, is 50 years old, took on the title of chief software architect. The company said Ozzie will work "side by side" with Gates on technical architecture and product oversight matters during the transition period.

### New Responsibilities

Mundie, 56, was given the new title of chief research and strategy officer and will gradually take over responsibility for the company's research and technology incubation efforts from Gates. In addition, Mundie will work with Brad Smith, Microsoft's general counsel, to lead its intellectual property and technology policy initiatives.

David Smith, an analyst at Gartner Inc., said Microsoft faces a changing technology landscape and needs to reinvent itself to accommodate IT trends such as the delivery of software as a service and the development of so-called Web 2.0 applications.

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Dave Chacon, a technical services manager at golf equipment maker Ping Inc. in Phoenix, said he thinks Ozzie also will be more willing "to take risks for the sake of the customer" than Gates is.

"I'm hoping that this translates into a company that is focused on providing products with such intrinsic value that there is no need to use customer lock-in techniques," Chacon said. "It always drives me crazy when I have to put up with marginal Product A because of an artificial coupling with valuable Product B."

Scherer-Plough's Wanko said he is eagerly anticipating moves in new directions from Microsoft—such as possibly spinning off some of its operations into separate companies.

"I like change—change is good," he said. "And anything that can potentially break up a monopoly, even a de facto one, is always good for consumers and the industry alike." Wanko added that with the planned changes, Microsoft "might get me to take a second look at its portfolio." ■

## Gates Downplays His Role, Plays Up Microsoft's Future

DEPLETE THE competitive challenge that Microsoft faces, Bill Gates said last week that the company "is well positioned for success in the years ahead"—even without him in a full-time job after July 2008.

During a teleconference last Thursday, Gates downplayed his involvement in product development during his time as the vendor's chief software architect.

"Any view that the innovation [at Microsoft] comes primarily from me reflects the notion that there has been an overfocus on my contribution," Gates said. "From Office to Windows, SQL Server, Exchange and Xbox—I am not the primary

person on any of those things."

Gates said he decided that Microsoft should announce the transition plan to send a clear message that it "is a very serious thing, [and] it is starting now." He added that he and Microsoft CEO Steve Ballmer have gone "carefully through the things I actually do—not what is written—and [decided] how those will be taken on" by other executives.

Ballmer said Microsoft "is capable of making a smooth and orderly transition to a new set of technical leaders without missing a beat."

But the software vendor needs "to be relentless in improving our agility as a company," Ballmer noted. "That

means ensuring that our products come to market on a timely basis...and that our time and energy are focused on customers."

Charles King, an analyst at Pund-IT Research in Hayward, Calif., said Gates is starting to step aside at the same time that Microsoft is preparing to release two "classic old-style" products: its Windows Vista client operating system and a new version of Office, both due for initial shipments later this year.

"In my mind, the market seems to be stepping away from that kind of computing," King said. In addition, King said he questioned whether Gates would be "the guy who is able

to lead Microsoft into the new mobile and more virtual kind of world."

Gates plans to relinquish his day-to-day involvement at Microsoft to order to devote more time to his charitable health and education work at the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation. However, Microsoft said that he will remain as its chairman after the transition period and serve as an advisor on major development projects.

"I don't see a time in the future where I won't be the chairman of the company," Gates said. "I want to have that anointment any day."

—HEATHER HANDELSTEIN, KEN MINOIA AND PATRICIA THURGOOD



Continued from page 1

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## Gates Downplays His Role, Plays Up Microsoft's Future

**DISMISSE THE competitive challenges** that Microsoft faces, Bill Gates said last week that the company "is well positioned for success in the years ahead"—even without him in a full-time job after July 2008.

During a teleconference last Thursday, Gates downplayed his involvement in product development during his time as the vendor's chief software architect.

"Any view that the innovation [at Microsoft] comes primarily from me reflects the notion that there has been an overfocus on my contribution," Gates said. "From Office to Windows, SQL Server, Exchange and XBox—I am not the primary

person on any of those things."

Gates said he decided that Microsoft should announce the transition plan to send a clear message that it "is a very serious thing, [and] it is starting now." He added that he and Microsoft CEO Steve Ballmer have gone "carefully through the things I actually do—not what is written—and [decided] how those will be taken on" by other executives.

Gates said Microsoft "is capable of making a smooth and orderly transition to a new set of technical leaders without missing a beat."

But the software vendor needs "to be relentless in improving our agility as a company," Ballmer noted. "That

means ensuring that our products come to market on a timely basis.... and that our time and energy are focused on customers."

Charles King, an analyst at FundRazr Research in Hayward, Calif., said Gates is starting to lay out parts of the same time that Microsoft is preparing to release two "classic, old-style" products: its Windows Vista client operating system and a new version of Office, both due for initial shipments later this year.

"In my mind, the market seems to be stepping away from that kind of computing," King said. In addition, King said he questioned whether Gates would be "the guy who is able

to lead Microsoft into the new mobile and more virtual kind of world."

Gates plans to relinquish his day-to-day involvement at Microsoft to focus on efforts to rebuild his charitable health and education work at the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation. However, Microsoft said that he will remain as its chairman after the transition period and serve as an adviser on major development projects.

"I don't see a time in the future where I won't be the chairman of the company," Gates said. "I want to have that association my entire life."

—HEATHER HAVENSTEIN  
NEW HAVEN AND  
PATRICK THODOLAN

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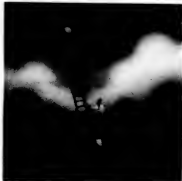
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## GLOBAL

## An International IT News Digest

## African Undersea Cable Project Back on Track

LUSAKA, ZAMBIA

**S**QUABLES that delayed the start of work on the Eastern Africa Submarine Cable System have been resolved, allowing the fiber-optic cable project — which is designed to link Africa to global telecommunications networks — to move forward.

At a meeting here this month, information and communications technology ministers from eastern and southern Africa agreed to give all African nations free access to the undersea system, said Samany Kirui, chairman of the project management team.

The debate over open access had threatened the \$200 million (U.S.) project because some member countries wanted to charge other nations for access rights — a position that went against the wishes of African economic development organizations and the World Bank. The Kenyan government announced in May that it was withdrawing support for the project because of the internal wrangling.

At the meeting, though, technology ministers from Botswana, Kenya, Malawi, South Africa, Zambia and Zimbabwe set a new schedule calling for work on the cable system to begin by September and be completed in the fourth quarter of 2007, Kirui said. The targeted completion date is four months later than previously planned.

Project managers are still evaluating bids from companies that are vying to lay the cable, according to Kirui.

■ MICHAEL MALAKATIA, IDG NEWS SERVICE

## Trade Group to Test Skills of Job Seekers

BANGALORE, INDIA

**T**HE NATIONAL Association of Software and Service Companies (Nasscom) has created a test that's designed to determine the technical and communication skills of applicants for jobs in India's outsourcing industry. Nasscom officials said that the on-

line test can be used to screen out applicants who lack skills needed by call center, business process outsourcing (BPO) and software services companies with operations in India.

The Delhi-based trade group estimates that only about 25% of technical school graduates and 10% to 15% of college graduates have the skills needed by outsourcing vendors, said Nasscom President Kiran Karnik. The problem is becoming acute because outsourcees are now hiring about 200,000 staffers each year, he added.

The test, which was developed with help from the country's outsourcing

vendors, grades applicants on seven parameters, including analytical and communication skills, according to Karnik.

Nasscom plans to roll out the test nationwide by November. The group said that more than 90% of India's software services, BPO and call cen-

ter companies have signed up to take part in the program.

■ JOHN RIBEIRO, IDG NEWS SERVICE

## Europe Plans Broader Internet Access

BRISA, LATVIA

**N**EARLY THREE-DOZEN European governments pledged last week to do more to spread Internet access to citizens who could be left behind by rapid technological advances.

Government ministers from 34 European countries agreed at a meeting here that they would use IT to help the elderly, the disabled and the unemployed overcome obstacles to Internet use. The represented nations included the European Union's 25 members, plus Romania, Bulgaria, Croatia, Turkey, Switzerland, Liechtenstein, Iceland, Norway, and Bosnia and Herzegovina.

The EU is separately aiming by 2010 to have the number of people with no Internet access, boost the reach of broadband services into rural areas and ensure that all government Web sites are accessible to the public. That effort is part of the EU's i2010 strategy, the digital economy component of a wider

initiative to boost employment and business growth and spur innovation. ■ PAUL MELLER, IDG NEWS SERVICE

## Intel's India Unit Faces Scrutiny on Expenses

BANGALORE, INDIA

**I**NTEL CORP.'s development center in India has come under scrutiny as part of the company's effort to cut worldwide spending by \$1 billion (U.S.).

Intel currently employs more than 3,000 workers in India, including about 2,900 engineers and 100 sales and marketing staffers. But the semiconductor maker said it has initiated an efficiency program in India and other countries to evaluate ways to reduce costs.

In a statement, Intel's subsidiary in Bangalore said that the company "is seeking to improve significantly not just in costs, but in the essentials — what we do and how we do it." The statement noted that the program will cut the company's worldwide workforce through attrition, redeployment and business changes.

A spokeswoman for Intel India declined to say whether there will be job cuts at the unit. Details of Intel's plans for the Indian operations will be disclosed in July, she said.

■ JOHN RIBEIRO, IDG NEWS SERVICE

## Capgemini to Double Its Workforce in India

BANGALORE, INDIA

**C**APGEMINI SA plans to double its workforce in India over the next 18 months and make the country its hub for delivering offshore IT and BPO services to corporate users.

"In terms of ability to scale number of staff and everything else, I don't think any other country can offer what India can," Aruna Jayanthi, vice president of outsourcing at Bangalore-based Capgemini India, said in an interview here earlier this month. The Indian subsidiary has about 4,600 staffers now and plans to increase its head count to 6,000 by year's end and to 10,000 by the end of 2007, Jayanthi said.

Paris-based Capgemini has offshore service-delivery centers in other countries, such as China and Poland. But the Indian operation is its largest offshore unit and has already grown by 80% annually over the past two years, Jayanthi said. She added that about 60% of the work done in India is for U.S. customers.

■ JOHN RIBEIRO, IDG NEWS SERVICE

Compiled by Mike Bucken.

## Briefly Noted

**Enger Ltd.**, an electric utility in Brisbane, Australia, has inked a contract worth 7 million Australian dollars (\$5.16 million U.S.) with IT services firm TUSC Computer Systems Pty. in Melbourne, TUSC, a unit of LM Ericsson Telecommunications, will implement a workforce management system from Mobile Data Solutions in Richmond, British Columbia, to automate Enger's field force operations.

■ SANDRA ROSSI, COMPUTERWORLD TODAY (AUSTRALIA)

**Wipro Ltd.** in Bangalore, India, has agreed to acquire Saccorix Pty., a Pune-based, Finland-based company that offers design and engineering services to telecommunications carriers, for \$25 million (\$31 million U.S.). Wipro said the acquisition will give it skills related to radio networks and secure mobile communications platforms that conform to the European-developed Terrestrial Trunked Radio standard, or Tetra.

■ JOHN RIBEIRO, IDG NEWS SERVICE

■ ICICI OneSource Ltd., a business process outsourcing vendor in Mumbai, India, is setting up two service delivery centers in Northern Ireland.

The company last week said that it plans to open the first center in Belfast next month and begin operations at the second facility by year's end. The two centers are expected to create a total of about 1,000 jobs over the next two years, according to ICICI OneSource.

■ JOHN RIBEIRO, IDG NEWS SERVICE

**Unibanco Holdings SA**, a banking company in São Paulo, Brazil, has signed an IT infrastructure outsourcing services contract with Unisys Corp. Unisys said the five-year deal has a potential value of \$47 million (U.S.). The contract calls for Unisys to provide management and support services for Unibanco's retail banking infrastructure.

**Karvy Global Services Ltd.**, a business process outsourcing firm in Hyderabad, India, said it will offer customers live online monitoring and measurement of its service delivery. Karvy's offering uses technology from MetricLine Inc., a Sunnyvale, Calif.-based developer of tools that provide real-time measurements of outsourced processes.

■ JOHN RIBEIRO, IDG NEWS SERVICE



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—Ralph Scyganda, Group Vice-President and CIO

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# Microsoft Security Chief Outlines Plans for Vista

BY ROBERT MACILLAN

**B**EN FATHI was named corporate vice president of Microsoft Corp.'s security technology unit in March. With his promotion from general manager for storage and high availability in Microsoft's Windows division, Fathi gained responsibility for responding to hacker threats and for laying out the company's overall security strategy for the highly anticipated Vista and Windows Server Longhorn products. In an interview with the IDC News Service last week, Fathi spoke about Vista's security issues and his overall long-range plans in the new role.

**How do you respond to some beta-tester complaints that Vista's secu-**

**rely features are making it too hard to use?** A lot of the comments that you've seen in blogs and articles are centered around User Account Control, and we took a lot of those comments to heart. We have talked to enterprise customers, and we have talked to consumers. And for Beta 2, we've significantly reduced the number of dialogs.

We also did something that I just announced [last week]: the ActiveX installation service. This is

something we've heard from our enterprise customers. They want to have the ability for an administrator to have [a Microsoft Management Console] where they can approve internal Web sites or partner company Web sites and list the applications that

can basically be white-listed. We have done that, and that will be available in [Release Candidate 1].

I agree with you that there's a certain amount of annoyance, but you can expect that with any product that's in beta, and we are committed to significantly improving the usability of this.

**Over the long term, does Microsoft plan to include all required security capabilities in the operating system?** If you look at OneCare [Microsoft's security offering], for example, OneCare is not just about security. It's about management; it's about taking over a consumer's machine and helping them in every way we can with everything from antivirus and antispyware to automatic backups, doing performance tuning, doing patch installation and simplifying

the overall management of that system. You're going to see complete management and simplification solutions from us, and one aspect of that is going to be security. Whether it's a big aspect or a small aspect is going to change over time.

Some of those pieces of functionality will eventually make it into the OS, and we're going to look for other things we can do in a management solution to simplify people's lives.

**Do you really think that it's going to be necessary to sell stand-alone security products in five years?** I don't know. We'll let the customers decide. That's what it's all about. Let them have the choice and see what their feedback is, and continue to innovate in those spaces.

**What would you like to have achieved a year from now as head of the security group?** One of the areas that I'm really passionate about in security is what we call a trust ecosystem. What I mean by that is taking

security from where it is today, where it's viewed by a lot of customers as a defensive technology—it's seen as a way of blocking bad things from happening on your machine—and taking that and turning it around into a technology that really enables you to do things securely and seamlessly without having fear. So you can take things like documents and share them with your friends and family or with workers in other companies securely. We've made a lot of investments in that space, such as Active Directory Federation Services and Rights Management Services. We've made the first steps, but we need to take that a long way, both in the consumer space and in the enterprise space.

I don't know if we're going to have something a year from now. But that's something that, as we look at post-Vista planning, I've been pushing the team to look at and invest in heavily.

MacMillan is a reporter for the IDC News Service.

## Q&A

## Nortel to Offer Bundled IP Telephony Systems

BY MIATT HANBLER

Nortel Networks Corp. last week unveiled a new IP telephony (IPT) initiative that offers standard packages of hardware and software that promise to cut customers' up-front costs by up to 30%.

The IPT 1-2-3 program aims to streamline the purchase process for large North American companies in order to stimulate upgrades from traditional telephony offerings to IP-based systems, said Nortel officials.

Jay Lassman, an analyst at Gartner Inc. in Stamford, Conn., said the program could give Nortel a much-needed boost as it tries to spur lagging IP telephony sales. "Nortel has given such attractive prices on [traditional circuit-switched gear] versus IPT that they've really lost ground in that IPT space as a result," he said.

One longtime Nortel customer, T.R. Bowlin, infra-

structure manager at Power Engineers Inc. in Hailey, Idaho, was briefed on the new program. He said it can help corporations gradually upgrade the process easier than replacing all of the older systems at once.

"I've found with Nortel, you don't have to do a forklift upgrade and completely turn over your network to a vendor to do voice over IP," said Bowlin. "A lot of firms want to do what we did, which is do VoIP over time, and my understanding is that's how IPT 1-2-3 will work."

Power Engineers, a diversified engineering firm, has about 300 Nortel IP phones, another 400 circuit-switched phones and related IP switching gear at 18 domestic and three foreign offices.

Bowlin estimated that his company has spent \$1.3 million on Nortel communications products over six years. About

half of that spending has already been recouped because of savings resulting from the use of IP telephony systems.

He said that conference call charges of up to \$34,000 per month using AT&T Inc. services were eliminated with a \$140,000 investment in a Nortel MCS 5100 server. Bowlin also noted that Power Engineers has realized some savings on toll calls that are now conducted over VoIP phones.

He said he expects that Power Engineers' total Nortel investment will pay for itself in two to three years.

### Keeping It Simple

Vendors have traditionally sold VoIP systems in custom-built packages. Nortel's new program relies on standard preconfigured packages of all the components needed for a new system, explained Diane Schmidt, director of IP

telephony marketing at Nortel. She would not provide details of the systems and said pricing has yet to be determined.

"Going from a legacy voice system to IP is relatively complex," Schmidt said. "There's quite a bit of engineering. Every vendor has had a customized approach, but customers needed it to be simpler."

Schmidt said the packaged systems can be installed for "as much as 30% less" than most customized systems.

Nortel's partners will use sales and support software to help customers find the right configuration for their operations, she said.

Schmidt said packages can be created based on the number of expected users and the applications needed. The Meridian 1 time division multiplexer switch (a traditional circuit-switched network de-

**I've found with Nortel, you don't have to do a forklift upgrade and completely turn over your network to a vendor to do voice over IP.**

T.R. BOWLIN, INFRASTRUCTURE MANAGER, POWER ENGINEERS INC.

sign) would include a new IP core processor, IP phones, a software release, a networking switch and related gear, all packaged with one part number and one price, Schmidt said. Additional phones and prepackaged applications could be added to the basic package, she said.

Lassman said there's no guarantee that Nortel's IPT 1-2-3 program will prove successful, and he questioned whether the vendor can "literally deliver plug-and-play IP telephony, including software."

## Government Managers Resist Telecommuting Plans

BY GRANT BROS

WASHINGTON

Top managers are holding back the spread of telecommuting at some government agencies, several officials said during a panel discussion earlier this month.

For government agencies to fully realize the benefits of telecommuting, such top managers need to change their attitudes, said Wendell Joice, head of the U.S. General Services Administration's government-wide telework team.

"We are hampered by constantly having to beg and plead," said Joice, speaking at a conference called Continuity of Operations Planning in the Federal Government and Industry: Enabling a Mobile Workforce in Times of Crisis. The event, held here, was sponsored by iPass Inc., RSA Security Inc. and research firm Input Inc.

Advocates of telecommuting said it can provide several benefits to employers, including the ability to continue operations during a national disaster or terrorist attack. Telecommuting can also help ease traffic problems in major cities, reduce pollution and increase worker productivity, advocates said.

### Benefits Questioned

Nonetheless, some managers remain unconvinced about such potential benefits and about their ability to adequately supervise teleworkers, said James Lewis, a senior fellow and director of the Technology and Public Policy Program at the Center for Strategic and International Studies in Washington.

"I don't want to dismiss the managers who have concerns here," he said. "What do we need to do to make them happy?"

For example, Lewis said, some of them have cited studies showing that potential savings from telework may not apply to government agencies, which have to give excess funding back to the federal general budget. He also noted that some government agency managers question studies suggesting that teleworkers

are more productive.

Embracing telework doesn't have to be hard, said Jack Penkoske, director of manpower, personnel and security at the

Defense Information Systems Agency (DISA), which must move its base 28 miles from Northern Virginia to Fort Meade in Maryland under mil-

itary base realignment plans. The agency is allowing more people to telecommute, but it would have done that with or without the move, he said.

The DISA plan aims to accommodate employees and boost recruitment of new workers, Penkoske said. ■

Gross is a reporter for the EDG News Service.



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DON TENNANT

# Thinking the Unthinkable

**A** WISCONSIN LAW that went into effect last week would probably be considered by most people to be a no-brainer. The law prohibits the implantation of any kind of microchip into a person's body without his consent. Who could fault legislation that serves as a proactive measure to safeguard personal privacy in the face of emerging intrusive identification and tracking technologies?

I could. And here's why.

A few weeks ago, at a dinner during Computerworld's Mobile & Wireless World conference in Orlando, I had the privilege of being seated next to one of the Best Practices award winners. In the course of our dinner conversation, we were talking about our kids, and he told me that he lost his teenage daughter in a car accident not too long ago. She had fallen asleep at the wheel. "Every parent's worst nightmare," he said.

"That's not my worst nightmare," I told him. "My worst nightmare is for one of my kids to go missing and to never be found." He understood and nodded. Not knowing would be maddening.

Losing a child in any sense is unthinkable, and yet it happens to parents every day. They think about it every day thereafter for the rest of their lives. Our worst nightmares can happen. So maybe we should think about what we can do to avoid that before it's too late.

There's nothing a parent can really do to prevent a car accident that results in a nightmare phone call from a police officer. But if my daughter, Shelly, who will be 15 next month, went missing, I'm not sure I'd be able to convince myself that I had done everything in my power to make sure I could get her back.

One day last week, I asked Shelly whether she'd be OK with it if I wanted to have a chip with a tracking capability implanted in her so we could find her if she was ever missing.



"Certainly," she said without hesitation. "Because I trust you." Her caveat: "Parents should only activate it if they really need it." Agreed.

The technology to implant GPS tracking devices in humans certainly exists, as a simple Google search will affirm. But it doesn't appear to be actively marketed or readily available in product form for implanting in children so they're lost or abducted.

There's just too much negative publicity surrounding the technology and its privacy ramifications, and the companies involved in its development

seem unwilling to run the political and public relations gamut. That's a shame.

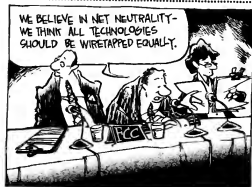
About six years ago, Sun Microsystems Chairman Scott McNealy took a now-famous position on the issue. "If I could embed a locator chip in my child right now, I know I would do that," he said. "Some people call that Big Brother. I call it being a father."

I agreed publicly with McNealy then, and I feel even more strongly about it now. So I was troubled by the fact that an amendment to the Wisconsin bill that provided for an exemption in the case of parents directing an implantation in a minor was revoked before the bill became law. And I'm wary of the precedent set by such preemptive legislation and of the course that other states might take.

For anyone who finds that position unacceptable, I'll tell you what. Find me a parent with a missing child who wouldn't give anything to have had a GPS tracking device implanted in that child, and I'll keep quiet. Make a compelling argument that there's an abducted child who wouldn't feel the same way, and I'll shut up.

Until then, I'll be a vocal advocate of thinking the unthinkable and doing something about it. ♦

*Don Tennant*



BRUCE A. STEWART

# Speaking the Language of Success

**H**AVE YOU ever uttered the words, "The user just won't get it"? If you have, then pay attention, because there is a way to sell any IT investment that's worthwhile to your users. It's called "speaking their language" — and that language involves money and risk, not technology.

This sounds so obvious as to be trite, but I remain utterly surprised as to be trite, but I remain utterly surprised that I keep running into two types of clients: IT professionals who are convinced that users won't pay for anything (so they never start the conversation) and IT professionals who keep trying to sell technology rather than business-related value.

If you're going to talk money and risk, you have to do a few things that may be foreign to you. Relax, though; this isn't rocket science. It's just something your vendors won't usually be good at packaging for you. You'll have to do a little work on your own.

First, remember that you get only a limited amount of time to sell any idea. You're busy, aren't you? Well, so is your client. So do your homework before going in to make your pitch. Yes, you can set the stage in casual conversation — and if you're not a regular coffee huddy with your client, become one so that you can spark some interest. But when you have an idea to sell, you need a formal meeting.

Second, what are the client's main objections? There are only four possibilities: I don't trust you; I don't think this is urgent; I have no time right now to do my side of this; and I have no money left. Although you may hear different words than these, all of your client's objections will come down to one or more of these — and technology isn't one of them. Third, you have to overcome these objections.



BRUCE A. STEWART is a former CEO and creative director vice president and director of creative services at Meta Group Inc. He is now an executive advisor in Vancouver, British Columbia. He can be contacted at [bruce@brucestewart.com](mailto:bruce@brucestewart.com).

Trust is created by spending time, executing well and expressing an honest interest in the client's affairs. This is best done in casual but regular interaction. Once you have built up trust, the other objections start to fall much more easily.

More ease urgency by talking about risk. Remember that there's a risk in not doing something, as well as in taking action. Someone whose application isn't on the hot recovery list, for example, is at risk; perhaps your proposed change overcomes the need to use traditional disaster recovery means. Doing a little research about what other companies are doing in your client's domain can also help. Are you missing out on something important that will be hard to catch up on later?

The time issue, unfortunately, is real in business today, but there is always time for things that are wanted badly enough. Show your client how to trade off money, risk and time by talking about different strategies. If you offer three strategies, "no" becomes one choice among many. Providing options beyond "yes" and "no" makes the ability to choose between alternatives real for many people.

Finally, the big one: money. Does your suggestion generate revenue to offset costs? Does it save money in the long run? Money — the most common objection — is the easiest to deal with if a value proposition is shown.

What all of this boils down to is thinking the way a really good account executive or consultant thinks. The good ones sell value to you. You can sell value to your clients, too — but only if you stop deflating yourself by selling technology alone. ■

DAVID MOSCHELLA

## Consumer Tech Seeping Into IT

THE CONSUMERIZATION of IT continues apace. Over the past two years, I have been watching technology products and services initially developed for consumers and small businesses have an increasingly significant impact on enterprise computing. In fact, I wrote two columns on that topic: "Keeping Up With Your IT Consumers" (Aug.

23, 2004) and "Change at Hand for PC Management" (June 20, 2005).

The two main points I made then still hold true today: 1) Many employees have better IT equipment and services at home than at work, and thus can no longer be treated like children who need to be told what to do, and 2) the public infrastructure that is emerging for consumers is in many ways superior to the private infrastructures typically provided by enterprise IT. Examples include e-mail, storage, wireless, collaboration and a wide range of specific applications. I wrote that the tension generated by the contrast between this ever-more-powerful public infrastructure and the aging private infrastructure of most companies would be one of the defining IT issues of the decade.

Over the past year, these trends have continued to gain traction, and the idea of consumerization has risen in importance and recognition. The following are among the current trends:

■ **Celebrity-style purchasing plans.** Companies are experimenting with giving employees personal technology budgets to better meet their IT needs.



■ **Browser-based applications.** The emergence of Asynchronous JavaScript and XML, better known as AJAX, is helping to close the once-large performance gap between client/server and browser-based systems.

■ **Consumerized offices.** Large companies with small branches and international offices have been quick to use public infrastructure instead of much more costly private facilities.

■ **Collaboration.** Taken together, blogs, RSS, wikis, Google and WebEx are redefining the way enterprise information is gathered, updated and communicated. The costs are radically lower than traditional knowledge management and collaboration tools.

■ **Multimedia.** The Apple iPod has rapidly emerged as an inexpensive and friendly way to distribute both audio and, increasingly, video materials across corporate networks.

■ **Voice over IP.** As an alternative to expensive companywide VoIP rollouts, many telecommuters, remote office employees and others whose calls may not be a high security concern are using Skype and Vonage.

■ **Software as a service.** The success

of Salesforce.com is just the most visible sign of a whole new wave of on-demand applications that are often a simple, low-risk way for companies to experiment with new software.

■ **Security.** Although the firewall deperimeterization debate rages on, many companies have concluded that it may no longer be useful to distinguish between users inside and outside their firewalls and that strong authentication and encryption over the Internet is really the only long-term individual network-access approach.

That's only a partial list of the many fronts on which consumerization is occurring, but it should be sufficient to give you a sense of the impressive rate of change. The bottom line is that IT organizations must recognize that employees are often keen to experiment with these services and that they're willing to spend their own money. In today's highly competitive marketplace, consumerization can be an important source of innovation and efficiency.

These issues are going to be important, and I'll continue to track them. What's happening in your company? ■

### WANT OUR OPINION?

More columns and letters to archives of previous columns are on our Web site [www.computerworld.com/columns](http://www.computerworld.com/columns)

## READERS' LETTERS

### VMs Virtually Battle For Real Resources

IN REFERENCE to virtual machines ("Getting a Grip on Virtual Machines," May 1), one problem always seems to bubble up when diagnosing issues. Even though the physical machine may meet a software manufacturer's recommendations for CPU and memory, the VM does not necessarily have access to those resources. In the desire to save money on hardware, many IT shops overload their servers with too many VMs, which fight over these resources. As a result, and unless you plan for poor system performance.

When setting up a VM, it is important that I meet recommendations and have allocated to it the appropriate resources. Not doing so is akin to saying, "Why cares if the manufacturer recommended a minimum setup of a Pentium II at 2 GHz and 4GB of RAM? This old 600 MHz 486 with 1GB should

suffice." One key problem in diagnosing these issues often lies in IT not being equipped to properly tell which resources the VM actually has access to as various VMs on the same box potentially fight for the same physical resources. As your article states, there is a need to manage both the virtual and physical servers together to prevent this type of issue from occurring in the first place.

**Mark Lawler**  
Chief technology officer,  
ProSight Inc., Portland, Ore.,  
e.mark.lawler@prosight.com

### Who's No. 1?

SO MONEY magazine and Solary.com rank software engineers as the best job in the U.S. [Career Watch, May 8]. You gotta be kidding! Software engineers lack unpredictable hours, work weekends and nights, receive midnight phone calls, have stress and get only few benefits. We of-

ten have no real career path and are abandoned when companies merge. A lot of us consider ourselves trapped!

**John R. Carter**  
Anastech, IL,  
mr4@comcast.net

### Statement in Story Was Misleading

THE APRIL 3 article "SAS Touts Its Integration, Storage Tools for BI Projects" attributed the following statement to John Enriquez, IT vice president at Pearl River Resort. The casino operator used SAS integration tools to quickly adjust its marketing plan after Hurricane Katrina to attract customers from hard-hit areas such as Biloxi and Gulfport, Miss., and New Orleans, according to Enriquez.

This statement is untrue. Pearl River Resort never targeted areas affected by Hurricane Katrina. We wholly reject any notion that SAS

integration was used to take advantage of victims of the hurricane. It is offensive and false. Pearl River Resort has been using SAS to determine who is visiting, where they are from and which aspects of Pearl River Resort each guest enjoys. This allows us to target our marketing and better serve our guests. Our partnership effort with SAS has been a success in that regard.

**Chuck Miller**  
President and CEO, Pearl River Resort, Choctaw, Miss.

COMPUTERWORLD welcomes comments from its readers. Letters will be edited for brevity and clarity. They should be addressed to: James Eickel, letters editor, Computerworld, PO Box 9171, 15600 Sunset, Framingham, Mass. 01701. Fax: (508) 879-4843. E-mail: [letters@computerworld.com](mailto:letters@computerworld.com). Include an address and phone number for immediate verification.



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# SPECIAL REPORT

06.19.06



## The Top Spot: Quicken Loans

By building applications instead of buying them, this online mortgage lender gets the systems it wants and IT workers get their hands on homegrown technology. That approach helped launch the company to the No. 1 spot for the second year in a row. **PAGE 34**

## The 100 Best

A list of this year's Best Places to Work in IT, plus rankings for the tops in diversity, training, retention and other areas. **PAGE 50**

## Best Balance

How do companies distribute sexy technology assignments while making sure someone keeps the day-to-day systems working? Or avoid the urge to overhire while keeping up with business growth? Here's how the Best Places make everyday balancing acts work. **PAGE 72**

# 100 BEST PLACES TO WORK IN IT 2006

Technologists at these companies are recognized as both creators and co-workers. When they propose ideas, their companies listen — and act.

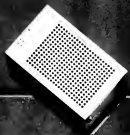
**BY MARY BRANDEL**



**W**ILLY ANDERSON remembers the day he realized the human impact of the work he does at Allstate Insurance Co. When he started as an intern at the insurer, which ranks No. 62 on Computerworld's 2006 Best Places to Work in IT list, "My work took on a whole new meaning after that. When you see how the claims reps can and can't touch the client when the system goes down, you realize you're in IT because of the promise Allstate sells its customers, not just because of your skill level with a given technology."

Just as important, Anderson later shared his eye-opening experience with all of his direct reports, who thereafter also got a chance to listen in on claims calls. Their ability to appreciate the way Allstate touches its customers' lives — along with Anderson's own freedom to institute that kind of

Continued on page 30





THE INVASION

\_DAY 13: These underpowered boxes are killing us. They can't handle the workloads. They can't handle the transactions. They can't handle the growing number of users. And I for sure can't handle the costs.

\_I'm putting all this junk out where it belongs and buying some real servers.

\_DAY 15: I've taken back control by moving to the IBM System p<sup>®</sup> platform. It's number one in over 70 leading benchmarks.<sup>1</sup> Take transaction processing for instance — the System p5 570 processes three times as many transactions per minute as the HP rx8620! And its price/performance is better.<sup>2</sup> It's all I ever wanted in a UNIX<sup>®</sup> server.

\_As for the old servers, well...they kept crashing. Into the ground.



[IBM.COM/TAKEBACKCONTROL/p5](http://IBM.COM/TAKEBACKCONTROL/p5)

## BY THE NUMBERS

## The Typical Best Place

\$10.5B	Revenue
78	Years in Business
32,001	Total number of employees
1,052	Total number of IT employees
34%	Percentage of IT staff members who are women
32%	Percentage of IT managers who are women
25%	Percentage of IT staff members who are minorities
15%	Percentage of IT managers who are minorities
\$295M	IT budget
\$1,943	Spent per IT employee on training
7	Training days offered annually for IT staff
42	Hours in the average workweek
90%	Have budgeted for salary increases for IT employees in 2006, by 4% on average
76%	Have budgeted for bonuses for IT employees in 2006

Continued from page 27  
change — are both key ways in which the company makes individuals in IT know that their work matters, he says.

It may seem difficult to believe that in this age where "employer" and "loyalty" don't often appear in the same sentence, employees of companies on this year's Best Places list agree that a big reason their firms deserve that ranking is because they foster a culture that nourishes not just their careers, but the human beings pursuing those careers as well. In fact, in our survey of more than 27,000 IT workers at this year's Best Places, 80% said their jobs are both interesting and challenging.

"Salaries are a good thing, but it's all about the feeling on the part of the employee that they're part of the whole experience," says Dennis Foster, vice president of enterprise technology planning and engineering and architecture at Washington-based Marriott International Inc., No. 19 on the list.

As for Cathy Brune, chief technology officer at Allstate, puts it, it's about encouraging employees to bring "the whole person" to work. "We try to create an environment where you can be not just a great technology — which is the left-brain, logical side — but you can also use your right brain, empathic, creative side." That means recognizing that IT people need to feel valued, stretch their capabilities, be part of a community and lead a life outside of work.

Best Places do this in myriad ways, such as making technology a vital part of the business strategy, fostering strong intracompany relationships, seeking and responding to feedback for improved work, life balance, enabling the flow of ideas and helping employees keep up with fast-changing technology.

And there are other reasons why employees of these companies showed high satisfaction levels this year. Just 23% of the companies experienced IT layoffs, versus 40% the year before. Hiring is up, salaries are expected to climb, and the majority of companies will issue bonuses (see chart at left). And although employee satisfaction with morale and salaries stayed virtually the same, the percentage of respondents who agreed or strongly agreed that their jobs are secure rose from 68% to 71% this year.

## Seeing the Purpose

There's no doubt that technology staffs were want to work with leading-edge technology, and many of the companies on the list meet that criteria. For instance, MasterCard International

YOU WANT PERKS?  
They've Got Perks

AT KENHAMETAL, IT employees attend a summer meeting at the Latrobe Country Club, home course of golf legend Arnold Palmer. In addition to the meeting, they enjoy a day of golf, entertainment by magicians, comedians or mind readers, and an opportunity to meet Palmer.

At Allstate Insurance, new parents — including those whom Allstate has helped financially to adopt children — get free car seats as part of the company's Buckle

Up, which ranks No. 34, is implementing an MPLS-based global network, and Allstate has based its application infrastructure on a service-oriented architecture.

But there's more to cool projects than just technology, says Paul Glen, author of *Leading Geeks* (Jossey-Bass, 2002) and a *Computerworld* columnist. "People want to work on something interesting, and that can happen because of the technology itself, their peers, the role they're playing or because there's an interesting outcome to the project," he says.

For Sharp HealthCare, which ranks 77 on the list, technology projects are inextricably linked to "the Sharp experience," which encompasses the company's efforts to create a great environment for its staff, physicians and patients. A case in point is Sharp's work in recent years to become an early user of wireless-enabled computerized intravenous pumps. The pumps incorporate customized control tables that regulate the amount of medication that gets administered to patients. By integrating them with the organization's 802.11-based wireless network, Sharp's IT staff enabled those control tables to be easily updated, and data can be quickly extracted for safety reviews and administrative purposes.

"At the time the pump was invented, no one else had done that," says Bill Spooner, senior vice president and CIO at the San Diego-based nonprofit health care organization. "It was clearly recognized as leading-edge from a patient safety standpoint."

Meanwhile, at Allstate, the importance of technology gets high visibility

## Up Baby program.

Salaried employees at L.L. Bean get up to five paid days to participate in activities like products are designed for, such as hunting, fishing, backpacking and cycling.

Northwestern Mutual sponsors 31 employee clubs that offer activities such as running, skiing, hiking, gardening, fishing and bowling. The company subsidizes the clubs with \$300,000 in annual funding.

MasterCard recently built a new physical fitness center on its campus in St. Louis, which also houses a wellness center, a convenience store, a carwash and a beauty salon.

Marriott International recognizes above-and-beyond performance levels with free stays at one of its hotels anywhere in the country.

— MARY BRANDEL

every day, whether at corporate meetings, when senior leaders interact with employees via streaming media and Web conferencing, or out in the field, when wireless tools enable mobile-response units to efficiently respond to victims of natural disasters.

"Being able to work remotely and more efficiently with better desktop tools, Web conferencing, mobile applications and streaming media is continually cited by employees as one of the best aspects of working at Allstate," says Carolyn Siskiewicz, director of IT communications. It helps that two senior IT leaders at Allstate have seats on the management board, she adds.

## Getting Along

Similarly, at MasterCard, IT and business go hand in hand, says Robert Recy, CTO at the \$2.2 billion credit card company. "You can't have one without the other," he says. "That's a little different from other places I've worked at, where IT is in some sense a sideline. Here, IT is the business."

Just the same, MasterCard recently involved even further in building solid relationships between IT and the rest of the business. It established the new position of "technology liaison," appointing more than 60 people globally to play this role in its major business units. "It will help us work with our business partners to provide them with the right services," Recy says.

This type of relationship-building effort is another trait shared among this year's Best Places. In fact, 99% of respondents said they enjoy good re-

Continued on page 32



## BY THE NUMBERS

## The Typical Best Place



Continued from page 27  
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“Salaries are a good thing, but it’s all about the feeling on the part of the employee that they’re part of the whole experience,” says Dennis Foster, vice president of enterprise technology planning and engineering and architecture at Washington-based Marriott International Inc., No. 39 on the list. Or as Cathy Brune, chief technology officer at Allstate, puts it, it’s about encouraging employees to bring “the whole person” to work. “We try to create an environment where you can be not just a great technologist—which is the left-brain, logical side—but you can also use your right-brain, empathetic, creative side.” That means recognizing that IT people need to feel valued, stretch their capabilities, be part of a community and lead a life outside of work.

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—MARY BRANDL

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Continued on page 32



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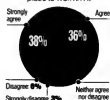


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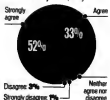
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## BY THE NUMBERS

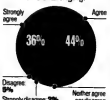
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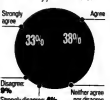
I am proud to work for my company.



My job is interesting and challenging.



I feel my job is secure.



Continued from page 30  
 relationships with their co-workers. At Northwestern Mutual (No. 15), employees get to know one another over free lunches in the cafeteria and through company-subsidized clubs.

At Marriott, global IT field representatives are sent out to visit hotels and reservation centers to discover business issues, alert users to new initiatives and ensure that service levels are acceptable. IT staffers periodically work at reservation centers or hotel front desks as well; that policy recently yielded improvements to Marriott's help desk training, Foster says.

At Sharp, a program called "Walk in My Shoes" embeds IT staffers in business units to observe what goes on during a normal workday. By the end of the year, 30% of the IT staff will have taken part in the program, says Chris Johnson, senior systems analyst at Sharp.

## Hands Across the Water

Best Places also extend relationship-building across the globe to international peers through cultural training and global travel. This is becoming important, with the average number of IT employees outside the U.S. increasing from 403 last year to 517 today at Best Places companies.

Such is the case at Kennametal Inc. (No. 96), a \$2.3-billion maker of tooling systems, with operations in 60 countries. As the Latrobe, Pa.-based company increases its overseas presence, it encourages IT staffers at all levels to travel abroad and offers cultural training classes. Recently, two help desk staffers traveled to India to train new employees there. "Now, since they know each other so well, everything jells together," says Karen Romanko, manager of the project office and global support center. "It's like they're talking to their neighbor 10 feet away."

But you can't encourage good relationships if you're not willing to act that example at the top levels of the department, says Ralph Niederst, CIO at Kennametal. "You've got to show a sincere appreciation for people's efforts, and the key word is sincere," he says. That means knowing things such as employees' hobbies and what their kids are doing. "Half the time, if you know their name, they act surprised," says Niederst, who often takes IT staffers to lunch or even fly fishing or trap-shooting.

It helps if the IT leader is extroverted, like the CIO at Sharp, who agreed to sit in the dunk tank at an event for raising IT group awareness. But it's

enough to simply be responsive, like Charles Schwab & Co.'s CIO, who personally answers every e-mail sent to him within 24 hours.

Open, nonhierarchical communication is another characteristic of Best Places. "When they get to know you outside of work, they're not afraid to come into your office," Niederst says. At Columbus, Ga.-based Aflac Inc., which ranks No. 25 on this year's survey, the lines between management and nonmanagement are intentionally blurred, according to Derrick Hensley, a senior applications developer at the \$14.3-billion insurer. "Employees feel comfortable promoting their ideas," he says. "We know we can suggest ideas to help be more efficient."

## A Whole Person

Recognizing the human side of IT also includes providing benefits that make it easy to have a life outside of work. In the survey of Best Places employees, two benefits rated "extremely important" by respondents were flexible hours (44%) and telecommuting (36%), which were outstripped only by profit sharing, health insurance and paid vacation.

But that means listening to what IT employees really value in terms of work/life balance and then taking action. When a MasterCard survey revealed a strong desire among many employees for a fitness facility in the St. Louis office, for instance, the company built one. And when Allstate workers wanted to put a ping-pong table into a conference room, they were given the go-ahead.

Then there's providing support to employees who are going through difficult life changes. Marriott, for instance, has a program through which employees can offer a day or two of their own time off to co-workers who are in need of extra personal leave time. And like many of the Best Places, Allstate allows flexible work schedules. In addition to providing tools and technology to support remote work. In fact, when the spouse of the company's lead security architect was transferred to Maine recently, Allstate helped relocate the architect's position to that state, Stikiewicz says.

Understanding that IT staffers need to continually update their skills and yet may be stretched for time, Best Places also create ample opportunities for advancing skills through e-learning programs that can be done at work or home or by reimbursing the cost of formal education. At Aflac, employees are not only reimbursed for exam fees for approved technical certifications, but

they are also given a financial award when they pass the exam.

Allstate has implemented programs to train IT personnel in a variety of soft skills. For instance, IT workers attend weeklong project-management boot camps or engage in team-building exercises in off-site environments such as forest preserves. But that requires an investment, Brune says. "When all the expense conversations come up, it's the first thing people want to cut, but it's the last thing I'd cut out," she says.

## Giving Life to Good Ideas

The counterpart to all that investment is reaping what you sow, and that's another thing Best Places are good at: harvesting the good ideas that flow from their employee base. Even better, many of these companies actively encourage new ideas to take shape.

For instance, MasterCard formed a group recently to read and discuss the book *The World Is Flat: A Brief History of the 21st Century* by New York Times columnist Thomas Friedman. "We wanted them to take the concept of globalization and discuss how that applies to our business," Rees says.

Northwestern offers financial rewards to employees who implement new ideas, based on the amount of money the idea saves, says David Granger, an IS human resources consultant at the company.


For Marriott, innovation comes down to a common theme. Foster says Success is never final. For instance, the IT group continually finds ways to change and simplify the experience of hotel guests, he says. The company recently piloted two new check-in/check-out processes involving kiosk and wireless Pocket PC technologies. For internal users, Marriott followed up on a project to centralize financial systems by Web-embedding them, and it's extending access to the system internationally. "We're constantly striving to improve," Foster says.

And that is how IT people like it. "People like to rise to a challenge—especially IT people," Niederst says. "Once you achieve a goal, you're part of a winning team, and then you gain confidence, which breeds more success."

After all, says Glen, "a Best Place to Work is not where you put your feet up and eat Twinkies." Rather, he says, it's where employees are given the opportunity to fully engage with the work they get up in the morning to do. ■

Brandel is a Computerworld contributing writer. Contact her at [marybrandel@verizon.net](mailto:marybrandel@verizon.net).





Multiple layers of security make life harder for threats.  
Multiple layers of security make life harder for you.



# Inside the TOP 5

A typical day at these top-ranked IT departments is full of hustle and hard work, and energized staffers.

## No.1 QUICKEN LOANS

By building its own applications, this online mortgage lender gets the systems it wants and IT staffers get their hands on homegrown technology.

BY MARY K. PRATT

### WHY THEY'RE TOPS

- Ranked No. 4 for satisfaction
- Ranked No. 3 for benefits
- Working longer per IT employee per year: 22,500
- 100% of its IT staffers are women

**T**ECH WORKERS at Quicken Loans Inc. don't hold back on compliments. Just listen to what some of them have to say about their company: "Great environment and great benefits." "Great culture." "Great leadership." "Great people." "Great place to work."

They aren't simply trying to flatter the boss. They cite specific policies and philosophies that have made the Livonia, Mich.-based company the No. 1 place to work for two years running. Workers say they value their ability to take ownership of ideas and projects. They also like the flexible environment that helps them balance home and work. And they enjoy the collaborative atmosphere.

The events of a recent day clearly demonstrate these points.

Continued on page 36

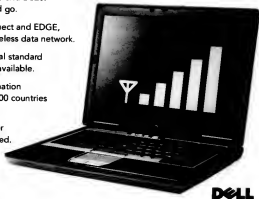


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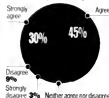
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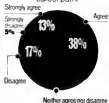
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BEST PLACES  
BY THE NUMBERS

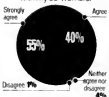
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for career growth  
at my company.



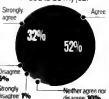
I have a well-defined  
career path.



I have a good relationship  
with my co-workers.



I have access to the  
tools and technologies  
I need to do my job.



Continued from page 34

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"Our No. 1 mission is instead of buying the technology, we build it," special projects manager Jay Ziraldo says, adding that this approach allows the company to get exactly what it wants.

As a result, IT staffers make about 20 production changes daily, whereas commercial applications get one or two changes a year, Lunsford says. Although the tasks can vary dramatically from one day to the next, changes could range from simple Web site updates and spelling corrections to complex database and system upgrades.

Such internal statistics aren't surprising, considering that Quicken Loans' data center has 480 servers and the IT department supports about 200 different business applications.

Meanwhile, Lunsford, Director of Engineering, Frank Laura and Lunsford's other direct reports get together for a biweekly managers' meeting, which generally focuses on major initiatives.

Although Laura has meetings throughout the day, he doesn't need ap-

**“Everyone is empowered to bring up ideas.”**  
RADAK PAPIEZ, CAPTAIN,  
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In fact, the IT department values communication so much that managers gave up their private offices to work alongside their teams.

**11 A.M.:** Papiez heads off to a 20-minute meeting with Quicken Loans' Web site marketing manager Matt Cardwell, marketing manager Lori Hadjiris and Lunsford. They talk about enhancing the external customer Web site by adding another communications channel.

Although the Web site is owned by the marketing team, Papiez's team developed the idea for the enhancement.

"Everyone is empowered to bring up ideas," says Papiez, who joined Quicken Loans nine years ago, after earning a business degree from the University of Detroit Mercy and playing a year of professional soccer.

**NOON:** Lunsford eats lunch at a nearby casual restaurant with data capture/analyst Curtis Houghmon, who won the lunch in an IT department-sponsored raffle benefiting an autism foundation.

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Such work requires close cooperation with the marketing department, and Laura says Quicken Loans' decision to collocate IT and marketing really pays off in this respect. "We've evolved as a team. It not only puts us on the same page, but we hear things about their projects that we would not otherwise hear," Laura says.

**12:45 P.M.:** Sandy Pasharikowski comes into the office. Pasharikowski, who manages eight busi-

ness systems analysts, usually works from home on Tuesdays and Thursdays so she can take her 4-year-old daughter to and from preschool.

**1 P.M.:** Pasharikowski meets with a member of the Rat Pack team, a subset of the Mouse Trap team that goes deep into business units to find opportunities for technology-based business improvements. She and business consultant Jenny Berg talk about what the team can do to help the mortgage bankers streamline their communications with external clients.

"We have a company culture that's very strong and rich and entrepreneurial," Lunsford says. "Culturally, people take ownership and have the ability to make an impact."

**“Our No. 1 mission is instead of buying the technology, we build it.”**  
JAY ZIRALDO, SPECIAL  
PROJECTS MANAGER

**6 P.M.:** Most of the IT staff heads home. Lunsford says he doesn't expect his employees to work around the clock, something that has helped earn Quicken Loans multiple "great places to work" awards.

Such philosophies also help the IT shop retain workers: Lunsford says the retention rate is around 90%, with many employees having 10 years of service or more. Lunsford himself started at Quicken Loans in 1997 as director of technology and became CIO in August 2000.

Although most workers have left, about 15 stay to attend an informal training session on .Net run by software engineer Chris Riser. This is a nighttime version of regular lunchtime workshops run by the IT department. "I encourage folks on my team to share what they know," Laura says.

**1 A.M.:** Systems engineer Bill Parker is working an unusual night shift as part of the quarterly maintenance on two of the company's major systems, among other tasks generally done during downtime. He works with developers, network administrators, quality assurance workers, back-end storage teams and the Linux and Windows teams to coordinate the work.

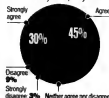
Workers at other companies might dread such overnight stints, but Parker has a different perspective. "I love working under pressure, and I love a challenge," he says. "Everyone's excited and raring to go."

*Pratt is a Computerworld contributing writer in Waltham, Mass. Contact her at marykpratt@verizon.net.*

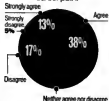


BEST PLACES  
BY THE NUMBERS

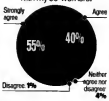
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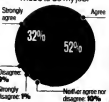
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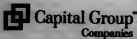
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# No.2 UNIVERSITY OF MIAMI

IT workers here are motivated by the students they serve and the relaxed approach of their CIO.

BY JENNIFER McADAMS

## WHY THEY'RE TOPS

- Ranked No. 1 for diversity; 70% of IT staffers are nonwhite
- Ranked No. 2 for training
- Ranked No. 3 for career development
- Ranked No. 3 for retention

**E**NVIGORATED by the natural energy flowing through a campus filled with youth and Florida sunshine, the University of Miami's technical staff is also motivated by a CIO whose philosophy centers on free food, humor and the freedom to explore new technologies.

Less-than-desirable factors also drive this formidable staff, which must brace each summer for a potentially hellacious hurricane season. During last year's major storms — hurricanes Katrina and Wilma — some university IT workers clocked between 36 and 72 hours straight to make sure systems and services persevered.

To combat hurricane anxiety and other challenges, CIO Lew Temares says he uses heavy doses of humor, which he claims is a major contributor in UM's snagging the No. 2 spot on *Computerworld's* Best Places to Work in IT list for the second year running.

"Through all the disasters we've endured, we've yet to have anyone crack up or break down mentally," he quips.

Temares doubles as dean of the Col-

lege of Engineering, and he insists on keeping UM's technology workers close to the students they serve. A typical day in the life of UM's technical staff reflects those various aspects of Temares' approach.

**6:30 A.M.:** The day starts early for UM's top IT managers, who compete with students for parking. "We think of our parking permits as 'bunting licenses,'" remarks Director of Applications Development Michael Zucker.

**9 A.M.:** Meetings are in full swing, and Zucker is again immersed in student life with the IT initiatives on his plate. "Today, I met with the dean of students

to discuss 'social computing.' Web sites such as MySpace and Facebook have become very popular and play an important part of our students' daily lives. We discussed the impact of improper usage of these social sites and their implication for students and the university," he recalls.

**10 A.M.:** Another student-driven issue

is on the table for the director of applications, database and Web development, Jackie Zucker (who is married to Michael), who meets with student representatives to discuss their IT needs.

Frequently, technology initiatives that support UM students are hatched in the school's different computing divisions, notes Tim Ramsey, associate vice president for IT.

"For example, we are working on an effort called 'My UM Backup.' For \$80 a year, students can back up 2GB of files, which they often type wirelessly around the campus," he explains. The effort is a brainchild of one of Ramsey's direct reports.

**11:30 A.M.:** IT staffers break for lunch but adamantly refuse to relinquish precious parking spaces. "Eating in the food court with the students and faculty allows you to enjoy the university ambience," says Michael Zucker.

**1 P.M.:** Through the rest of the day, it's one meeting after another with vendors, student representatives and

UM administrators. Michael Zucker meets with executives from Ariba Inc. to plan a major upgrade of purchasing, procurement and electronic forms software. He grills the vendor on training techniques to bring UM administrators up to speed quickly. Meanwhile, Jackie Zucker is working through IT issues surrounding health insurance changes that will affect graduate students working as teaching assistants.

Still, scheduled meetings don't totally dictate the days of top IT executives at UM. Senior managers make it a point to leave hours open for staffers eager to put forth new ideas and get their hands on the latest technology.

"Our employees may not be rewarded with a bunch of shares in a company, but they are invited to test out new products," says Joe Donahoo, assistant dean of the College of Engineering. "This gives them a special reward in seeing an idea come to fruition." ■

McAdams is a freelance writer in Vienna, Va. You can contact her at [jmitchwriter@aol.com](mailto:jmitchwriter@aol.com).



University of Miami CIO

center is flanked by staffers

(left) and



We're moving the conversation from  
data to applications—where it belongs.

**Data**

**Applications**



## No. 3 THE CAPITAL GROUP

It's all about teamwork at this investment management firm, where IT workers are found in every facet of the business.

BY JENNIFER McADAMS

### WHY THEY'RE TOPS

- Ranked No. 4 for diversity
- Ranked No. 4 for training
- Offer 11 days of training per year for each IT worker
- 90% of the IT staffers are suburban

IT'S LATE AFTERNOON, and IT workers are poised on the trading room floor of The Capital Group Cos., ready to assist brokers scrambling to close deals. This scenario highlights the company's determination to keep technology workers energized and tightly aligned with key business units.

Of the many IT staffers working the trading floor, some are junior associates. Top IT executives at this Los Angeles-based investment management company often place newly plucked university recruits alongside seasoned brokers.

Following its philosophy, Capital

Group shuns top-down management and groom technical staffers for a variety of positions throughout the organization and around the world. These and other strategies have landed this newcomer in the coveted third spot on *Computerworld's* Best Places to Work in IT list.

"We've developed an approach that lets our employees work in collaboration, rather than adhering to rigid hierarchies," says Capital Group President Larry Clemmensen. "This has resulted in strong relationships between IT and our business users." A snapshot of a typical day here backs him up.

**6:30 A.M.:** IT executives arrive early and jump on conference calls with their counterparts across the Atlantic. "The early-morning hours are for operational, project and strategic meetings that involve Europe," explains Debra Lubelski, director of U.S. investment technology and support.

Infrastructure architecture groups also get in early to brainstorm with European end users on products and services available from the company's

scattered technology labs and application offices. Capital Group's labs have spawned tools such as customized BlackBerry devices and laptops outfitted to meet coverage and application needs unique to Europe.

"We spend a lot of time on mobile devices," says Dan Rourke, senior IT manager responsible for Capital Group's technology infrastructure.

**8:30 A.M.:** Throughout the morning, it's "meetings, meetings, meetings" for Vicki Lederman, an IT group vice president. "We interact with business users, with peers and others in IT," she says.

These meetings take place up and down the ranks. For instance, the six officials charged with Capital Group's major IT divisions gather regularly with Clemmensen to tighten bonds between technical projects and business operations. "I have daily conversations with this group of six," he notes.

**11 A.M. TO 2 P.M.:** Now that the business day in Europe is over, IT managers set their sights inward. "Midday is usually focused on the U.S. team and one-on-one meetings," says Lubelski.

Face time with newer employees is crucial to Rourke. "I like to spend time talking to the associates to try to figure out what they want to do and assess their skills and match them with the best I can with different business units," he says.

**2 P.M. TO 5 P.M.:** For many, the day will close with conference calls to executives in Asia. "For instance, we've had to go over different solutions to get around the fact that BlackBerries simply don't work in Japan," explains Terri Murray, IT manager responsible for global support for the company's investment sites. "It's a challenge, because we try to standardize across the enterprise."


Yet it's far from death-by-meeting for Capital Group employees, who regularly take time out to have some fun together.

"I'm in San Antonio, Texas, and today is Fiesta," says Rourke of a day in late April when the city recognizes heroes from the Alamo and the 1836 Battle of San Jacinto.

"We're having a hat parade. Members from each of our teams here have made hats for the managers," he says. "We foster an environment that is fun, friendly and productive." ■

McAdams is a freelance writer in Vienna, Va. Contact her at [jmtechwriter@aol.com](mailto:jmtechwriter@aol.com).





## THE WORLD ACCORDING TO

Help people to support **and ideas** to enable. Look out world, because my network's coming through.

— **Wendy**

Wendy is a

senior

# No.4 AMERICAN FIDELITY ASSURANCE

This Midwest insurance company cultivates the professional development of its IT staffers while fostering a family-friendly atmosphere.

BY MONICA SAMBATATO

## WHY THEY'RE TOPS

- Ranked No. 4 for career development
- Ranked No. 6 for customer service
- IT employee turnover in 2005 was 8.4%
- 100% of IT employees attend professional in 2005

**A**T AMERICAN Fidelity Assurance Co., IT staffers enjoy the usual benefits, such as bonuses and profit sharing. But what sets this Oklahoma City-based insurance company's IT group apart from others, say employees, is its open-door culture, clear expectations and an environment that promotes learning and professional growth. A snapshot of a typical day also demonstrates the family-friendly atmosphere at this top IT department.

**7AM:** Jim Lupton, director of systems management, starts his day the way many IT professionals do: He checks his messages to see if any problems came up overnight and reviews his to-do list. He comes in early, but other



Michael J. Duggan/Fidelity IT Dept.

IT employees arrive according to the schedule they see fit for their job functions. That's important to Gina Herndon, a systems analyst, who has two children to get off to school. "If I need to go to a school program, that's very welcomed and encouraged," says Herndon, who has been with American Fidelity for 21 years.

Today, things are quiet. So for Lupton, it's a green light on a project meeting at 9 a.m. and a disaster test review after that. And it's looking like he'll get his workout in this morning at the company's "House of Pain," an on-site gym employees can use at any time during the day.

As always, Lupton's door is open as other IT employees file into work. This morning, a staffer stops by to thank him for being a reference in that family's child adoption process and to discuss a recent fundraising event the employee participated in. "We talk about what's going on in our lives," Lupton says. "There's a real family mentality."

**10AM:** Gerald Crabbe arrives to start his shift on the company's support hotline. For Crabbe, a field automation support specialist, job security and a clear path for career growth are key. "The last place I worked at, they were limited in movement up," he says. Crabbe would like to move into a programmer's position and says the company's training programs and tuition reimbursement plan will help him do that.

"The opportunities are endless,"

agrees Herndon, "and training is just exceptional."

**1PM:** Central to the department's activities this afternoon is the "big board," which lays out timelines for all ongoing IT projects and who is responsible for what. If a task isn't completed on time, everyone in the department knows it needs to be done, and the person responsible for completing that task can see if he's holding up someone else's work. "Employees know where they stand at all times," Lupton says.

This project methodology sets clear expectations and promotes a sense of ownership — not only for IT people, but for users in the business units as well. Lupton says. Users hold a stake in all IT initiatives, he explains, and they take an active part in all phases of projects, from design to execution.

And that partnership extends to get-togethers to celebrate the completion of a project or to just blow off steam. For example, the IT department recently joined other company employees in the parking lot for a sand-castle-building party.

**5PM:** Lupton has finished up with the afternoon's meetings and will likely plow through some e-mails later tonight at home. And while Crabbe finishes the last leg of his shift, which ends at 7 p.m., Herndon packs up for the day. If a new project is under way, she may bring her laptop home to work on it. "But it's never high pressure," Herndon says. "Sometimes you're just fired up." ■

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Members of the Grant Thornton IT team thinking a little differently about the company culture. (Photo by Grant Thornton IT team)

## No. 5 GRANT THORNTON LLP

For IT staffers at this accounting firm, developing their business skills and keeping systems humming are all in a day's work.

BY EUGENE A. DEMATRE

### WHY THEY'RE TOPS

- Ranked No. 5 for customer service
- Pays \$2,500 per year per IT staffer on training
- 43% of its IT staffers are women
- 29% of its IT staffers are veterans

**A**T GRANT THORNTON LLP, the "Grant Thornton experience," as employees call it, is how the Chicago-based accounting firm is providing career development for its staff and maintaining its integrity and technology during a period of rapid expansion.

David Holyoak, partner and CIO, started out as a CPA more than 20 years ago on the business side of the firm. He notes that "over the past five years, we've grown significantly, from 2,700 to more than 5,000 people total. With growth comes complexity and change. How do we keep pace [with] or, better put, stay ahead of that growth from a million-dollar to a billion-dollar organization? We intend to support our internal customers with the best technology available." A snapshot of a

*Continued on page 46*

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**6:45** I think the Oak Brook data center feels almost like a club—we're truly a close team. We [also] have some of the best cutting-edge technology right here in our data center.

\*\*\*\*\*  
CRAG COHEN, NETWORK ENGINEER

*Continued from page 44*  
typical day at Grant Thornton shows how that's done.

**6 A.M. TO 8 A.M.:** Network engineer Craig Cohen is on call three days a week. "I'm going through the transition from being a remote-access engineer to learning the essentials of a network engineer," he says. "After my manager feels that I have the appropriate training, I'll be on call all the time."

**8:30 A.M.:** Melissa Hunt, regional technology manager at Grant Thornton's Dallas office, logs into instant messaging and e-mail. She has already checked them from home with her BlackBerry. "I'm responsible for relationships with regional managing partners, the office managing partners and the IT support staff in the field in my region," she says. "I'm also involved with the national work/life balance task force. I get to be involved in the business side as well, to learn about the business and take that back to IT."

**9 A.M.:** "Typically, I have a couple of hot issues," says Cohen. "Packing up a router or shipping it out or making a change to an interface. I may have to call people back or respond to e-mail—dealing with 'little fires.'"

Osborne, manager of IT communications and training, meets with the strategic learning group regarding plans for a formal 360-degree review program. After that, she meets with one of Grant Thornton's relationship managers. "Their role is to be the liaison with internal customers, to listen to what customers need and help the back-office staff understand what those needs are," Osborne says.

**10:30 A.M.:** Acsai Narisak, a Web programmer in Grant Thornton's application development and programming unit, attends a two-hour class in Finance 101. "It's very helpful to someone like myself, who's oriented toward IT," he says. "Such classes count

toward our goal of 40 hours of training per year."

**10:45 A.M.:** The IT infrastructure support staff installs Visio on Osborne's computer. "The staff is fabulous," she says. A few years ago, Grant Thornton had a program designed to recognize and reward employees for outstanding customer service, "but it became an ineffective measurement because people were doing so well," she says.

**NOON:** As part of the IT department's open-door policy, Holyoak has "skip-level" lunches with his staffers about once a month. "Upper management gives us the opportunity to have a conversation with them about what problems we have and what we're doing well," Narisak says.

"We have monthly socials, and every two years there's a three-day conference for all IT employees in Chicago," Hunt says. "The CEO attended the last conference, in November, and I actually got to meet him. As a team, we decided to wear T-shirts with techie sayings. Our teammates voted on which best matched our personalities. On Saturday we wore our shirts, and everyone had a good laugh."

**2 P.M.:** Cohen views frequent interruptions positively. "The more people trust me to check something, as opposed to my manager, that's a big compliment," he says. "I think the Oak Brook data center feels almost like a club—we're truly a close team. We [also] have some of the best cutting-edge technology right here in our data center."

Osborne spends the rest of the day in software demos for project management methodology software. "The fact that I was included in the panel, despite my nontechnical background, means a lot," she says. "I got to bring a different perspective, and I learned a lot about project management."

Meanwhile, Cohen says, "I'm involved in projects such as evaluating new technology, assisting in rollouts or creating various mediums, such as a Web site for communication or instruction documents. I'm also creating a lab for internships."

**6 P.M. TO 8 P.M.:** For Cohen, self-improvement continues after he gets home. "I try to pick up some sort of journal to keep my skills up, with IT as well as organizational skills," he says. "I'm in a Cisco class this week. I have over 70 hours of training this year. Grant Thornton offers lots of recognition and opportunities." ■





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*Continued from page 44*  
typical day at Grant Thornton shows how that's done.

**6 A.M. TO 8 A.M.:** Network engineer Craig Cohen is on call three days a week. "I'm going through the transition from being a remote-access engineer to learning the essentials of a network engineer," he says. "After my manager feels that I have the appropriate training, I'll be on call all the time."

**8:30 A.M.:** Melissa Hunt, regional technology manager at Grant Thornton's Dallas office, logs into instant messaging and e-mail. She has already checked them from home with her BlackBerry. "I'm responsible for relationships with regional managing partners, the office managing partners and the IT support staff in the field in my region," she says. "I'm also involved with the national work/life balance task force. I get to be involved in the business side as well, to learn about the business and take that back to IT."

**9 A.M.:** "Typically, I have a couple of hot issues," says Cohen. "Packing up a router or shipping it out or making a change to an interface. I may have to call people back or respond to e-mail — dealing with 'little fires.'"

Osborne, manager of IT communications and training, meets with the strategic learning group regarding plans for a formal 360-degree review program. After that, she meets with one of Grant Thornton's relationship managers. "Their role is to be the liaison with internal customers, to listen to what customers need and help the back-office staff understand what those needs are," Osborne says.

**10:30 A.M.:** Aenoi Narisak, a Web programmer in Grant Thornton's application development and programming unit, attends a two-hour class in Finance 101. "It's very helpful to someone like myself, who's oriented toward IT," he says. "Such classes count

toward our goal of 40 hours of training per year."

**10:45 A.M.:** The IT infrastructure support staff installs Visio on Osborne's computer. "The staff is fabulous," she says. A few years ago, Grant Thornton had a program designed to recognize and reward employees for outstanding customer service, "but it became an ineffective measurement because people were doing so well," she says.

**NOON:** As part of the IT department's open-door policy, Holyoak has "skip-level" lunches with his staffers about once a month. "Upper management gives us the opportunity to have a conversation with them about what problems we have and what we're doing well," Narisak says.

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# COMPUTERWORLD 100 BEST PLACES TO WORK IN IT

Interactive chart

www.computerworld.com/06/bestplaces

NA

RP

## How They Were Chosen

**F**OR THE 13TH YEAR IN A ROW, Computerworld conducted a survey to identify the 100 Best Places to Work for IT professionals.

In August, a sample of 1,000 IT professionals were chosen from computer-related companies in the U.S. in quality to complete the survey, participating companies, both public and private, had to have 2005 revenue of \$50 million or greater and employ a minimum of 500 total employees and a minimum of 75 IT employees in the U.S.

Participants, submitting nominations, were asked to provide the name and contact information of an appropriate individual at their company who was familiar with all IT access to employment statistics and local cultural data, as well as information about benefits policies and programs for the IT department and the company as a whole.

In January 2006, contacts at the nominated companies received a 100 question survey asking about their organizations' average salary and bonus increases, the percentage of IT employees receiving promotions, IT staff turnover rates, training and development opportunities, and the percentage of women and minorities in IT staff and management positions. In addition, information was collected on how the organizations reward outstanding performance, how their retention programs are structured and what benefits they offer, from elder and child care to flexible and tuition reimbursement for college and technology certification courses.

All participating companies were required to obtain feedback from

their employees. Upon completion of the company survey, company representatives were mailed instructions on selecting a random sample of 100 U.S. based full- and part-time IT staff to be used in employee survey. The response to the survey went directly to a third-party research firm.

Topics covered in the employee survey included satisfaction with training and development programs, base salary, bonuses, health benefits and work-life balance. In addition, employees were asked to rate morale in their IT departments and the importance of various benefits; they were also asked to rate the degree to which they agreed with a variety of statements related to subjects such as career growth and management's fair and equal treatment of employees.

A total of 27,000 IT professionals responded to the employee survey from the final 100 companies selected.

The nomination survey, company survey and employee survey were all conducted via the Internet. The company and employee survey portions of the research were closed in March 2006. In scoring the responses from the company and employee surveys, company results were weighted based on importance ratings from the employee component. Approximately one-half of the total scoring system is based on employee responses, with the remainder based on the survey about the company's benefits and other programs.

The year's survey process was managed by Michele Prosser of IDC Research.

MARI KEEFE AND ELLEN FANNING,  
BEST PLACES PROGRAM COORDINATORS

	BEST PLACE	IT EMPLOYEES	IT EMPLOYEES PER 1,000	WHAT'S SPECIAL?			
1	Quicken Loans Inc. Livonia, Mich.	3,345	277	8.5%	8.9%	5	» This online lender offers its IT workers personal development training and a leadership training program. IT workers can receive a year-end performance-based bonus of up to 25% of their salary. Staff bonuses can be as high as \$90,000. Job-related expenses up to \$2,000. Free education and tuition are available anytime, and flexible schedules to complete and complete are given out every Thursday. Employees children can receive \$4,000 a year toward tuition and expenses at a college or vocational school.
2	University of Miami Coral Gables, Fla.	8,871	308	6%	15.9%	6	» This university, located just south of Miami, provides full-time rotations for employees and their dependents. Innovative IT workers are rewarded with promotions, expansion of responsibilities, more career growth and public recognition for their success. Employees get 50% discounted tickets to all athletic events, free entrance to an on-campus art museum, discounted access to a wellness center, discounts at the bookstore, and discounted or free tickets to cultural events.
3	The Capital Group Cos. Los Angeles	6,331	1,860	6.5%	8%	12	» This global investment management firm creates individual development plans for IT workers to identify areas of concentration and specific activities to gain new skills. The average length of service for IT workers is eight years. Employees receive 18 days' vacation in the first year, 20 days in the third year, 23 days in the 10th year and 28 days in the 20th year, with an extra five days of bonus vacation every five years. The company also provides continuous assistance of up to \$200 a month in many locations. Full-time IT workers can request a community service leave of absence.
4	American Fidelity Assurance Co. Oklahoma City	1,443	182	3.8%	29%	6	» This provider of voluntary supplemental life and health insurance covers approximately 1.5 million customers nationwide. A third-generation family-owned company, it offers some IT staff a flexible schedule to help balance work and family life. An "off-colleague" bonus program was instituted about 10 years ago as a way of thanking employees for helping the company achieve selected financial goals. A "financial scoreboard" is published monthly as a way to measure progress throughout the year.
5	Grant Thornton LLP Chicago	4,734	128	7.6%	8.6%	5	» This firm's parent company, Grant Thornton International, was founded by Alexander S. Grant in 1824 and is now one of the world's largest accounting firms. The U.S. subsidiary has approximately 50 offices and offers free services and business solutions, as well as assistance with Software Quality Assurance and mergers and acquisitions. A credited IT services model creates a multilevel support structure within the IT department. IT staffers can choose the project teams and special assignments they want to work on.
6	SAS Institute Inc. Cary, N.C.	5,329	268	1.8%	16.7%	5	» Incorporated in 1976, SAS is the world's largest privately held software company. Nearly one percent of employees have their own offices and can select the chair, keyboard, mouse and office arrangements that fit them personally. Employees are allowed to set their own hours based on their needs. An on-site health care center at headquarters provides free services to employees and their covered dependents. The company provides two on-site Microsoft child care facilities. SAS's 582,000 square-foot gym includes a 19,000-square-foot basketball court with a \$5 million pool.
7	Pratt Caribbean Cruises Ltd. Miami	4,028	368	1%	6.7%	7	» The company has two cruise brands - Celebrity Cruises and Royal Caribbean International - which carry about 3.5 million passengers a year, making it the world's second-largest cruise line. IT staffers are offered off-site formal training and seminars, or site individual training and group formal training in technologies such as Java and Visual Basic. Employees are offered flexible work arrangements and are encouraged to participate in community events during work hours, including United Way and Salvation Army programs. Employees also coordinate an annual children's bike ride.

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# COMPUTERWORLD

# 100

## BEST PLACES TO WORK IN IT 2006

Interactive Computing

www.computerworld.com/DB/BestPlaces

NA  
BP

## How They Were Chosen

**F**OR THE 13TH YEAR IN A ROW, Computerworld conducted a survey to identify the 100 Best Places to Work for IT professionals.

Last August, Computerworld started asking nominations from companies with a headquarters in the U.S. To qualify to complete the survey, participating companies, both public and private, had to have 2005 revenue of \$250 million or greater and employ a minimum of 500 total employees and a minimum of 75 IT employees in the U.S.

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The year's survey process was managed by Michele Peoples of IDC Research. ■

— MARI KEETE AND ELLEN FANNING,  
BEST PLACES PROGRAM COORDINATORS

BEST PLACE		2005 REVENUE	2005 EMPLOYEES	IT EMPLOYEES	IT EMPLOYEE PROMOTIONS	2005 IT STAFF TURNOVER	WHAT'S SPECIAL?
1	Veritas, Mich.	\$,345	277	8.1%	9.8%	5	Veritas has a strong commitment to its employees, offering a comprehensive benefits package, including a 401(k) plan, health insurance, and a flexible work schedule. The company also offers a variety of training and development opportunities, including a tuition reimbursement program.
2	Coral Gables, Fla.	\$,571	220	0%	10.0%	8	Veritas has a strong commitment to its employees, offering a comprehensive benefits package, including a 401(k) plan, health insurance, and a flexible work schedule. The company also offers a variety of training and development opportunities, including a tuition reimbursement program.
3	Los Angeles	\$,221	1,280	8.5%	5%	12	Veritas has a strong commitment to its employees, offering a comprehensive benefits package, including a 401(k) plan, health insurance, and a flexible work schedule. The company also offers a variety of training and development opportunities, including a tuition reimbursement program.
4	Oklahoma City	1,442	102	3.8%	10%	6	Veritas has a strong commitment to its employees, offering a comprehensive benefits package, including a 401(k) plan, health insurance, and a flexible work schedule. The company also offers a variety of training and development opportunities, including a tuition reimbursement program.
5	Chicago	4,784	100	7.8%	9.8%	8	Veritas has a strong commitment to its employees, offering a comprehensive benefits package, including a 401(k) plan, health insurance, and a flexible work schedule. The company also offers a variety of training and development opportunities, including a tuition reimbursement program.
6	Cary, N.C.	\$,320	200	1.8%	10.7%	5	Veritas has a strong commitment to its employees, offering a comprehensive benefits package, including a 401(k) plan, health insurance, and a flexible work schedule. The company also offers a variety of training and development opportunities, including a tuition reimbursement program.
7	Mountain View, Calif.	4,028	200	1%	9.7%	7	Veritas has a strong commitment to its employees, offering a comprehensive benefits package, including a 401(k) plan, health insurance, and a flexible work schedule. The company also offers a variety of training and development opportunities, including a tuition reimbursement program.

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BEST PLACE		TOTAL IT EMPLOYEES		IT EMPLOYEES PER \$100,000		WHAT'S SPECIAL?	
8	<b>The Mitre Corp.</b> McLean, Va. www.mitre.org	5,824	298	5%	8.1%	6	<b>This not-for-profit organization provides IT consulting for several government agencies.</b> With managed support, IT workers can leverage a variety of teams, leveraging part-time employment or subcontracting on an occasional or ongoing basis. A summer hours program allows employees who have finished their work and work hours commitment to take early on Fridays. Employees in the related plan can contribute up to the maximum amount allowed by law, and the company contributes up to approximately 75% of their salaries.
9	<b>University of Pennsylvania</b> Philadelphia www.upenn.edu	17,300	281	3.7%	5%	8	<b>This Ivy League university was founded in 1791 by Benjamin Franklin.</b> After offers a 403(b) retirement plan in which a fully matched up to 5% of pay, with options for additional employer contributions and catch-up savings for employees 50 and older. The university recently added a pay cap functions serves on campus and the strategies for both incomes. Employees are eligible for the tuition assistance program, and after three years their children, spouses and domestic partners are eligible for discount tuition.
10	<b>General Mills Inc.</b> Minneapolis www.genmills.com	17,751	603	3.3%	22.4%	5	<b>This food manufacturer is known for brands such as Betty Crocker, Pillsbury and Cheerios.</b> In the past year, the company has expanded its employee-led Women's Program to include mentoring programs covering topics such as soft skills, gender style differences and working mothers. The US Diversity Champions program was designed to foster an IT community that understands and values ethnic diversity. This employee led group is sponsored by a senior IT leader.
11	<b>Mount Carmel Health System</b> Columbus, Ohio www.mchc.org	9,120	121	2.4%	5%	2	<b>This health care system serves the greater Columbus area and central Ohio, has its own nursing college and trains medical students from Ohio State and Wright State universities.</b> The organization encourages its staffers to develop their particular area of strength in specialty, recognizes individual and team accomplishments and offers work-life balance programs.
12	<b>FedEx Corp.</b> Memphis www.fedex.com	253,625	6,464	4.7%	5%	5	<b>FedEx's FedEx Express unit delivers some 3 million packages each day, and its FedEx Ground unit provides ground delivery of small packages in North America.</b> Last year, a program was launched to give FedEx IT employees a better defined career path. The program offers more opportunities for in-band promotions, a comprehensive overview of career opportunities, a new structure that aligns the FedEx IT organization's performance based culture and compensation program with the external labor market, and performance standards that help managers recruit, develop and advance employees and help employees create individual development plans.
13	<b>Securian Financial Group Inc.</b> St. Paul, Minn. www.securia.com	2,309	368	2%	15%	8	<b>Formerly known as Minnesota Life, the company offers individual and group life and disability insurance and annuities.</b> The majority of IT hiring is at the entry level, with the goal of training and promoting IT staffers to senior technical and managerial positions. A job-posting program allows IT workers to move between all types of jobs within the company. Securian provides both technical and managerial training, an on-site degree and compensation reimbursement. The company also offers on-site child care.
14	<b>American Century Investments</b> Kansas City, Mo. www.amercent.com	1,844	354	3.5%	5%	15	<b>Securities providing health and well-being at its mutual funds administrator includes medical, dental, vision, disability, voluntary long-term care, retiree, health life and employee assistance programs.</b> A retirement plan provides the advantages through employer contributions and fee-deferred company contributions such as company match, an annual fixed contribution and a discretionary profit-sharing contribution. An on-site cafeteria offers subsidized meals, and the on-site fitness center is staffed with personal trainers and offers aerobic and yoga classes, nutrition counseling and massage therapy.
15	<b>Northwestern Mutual</b> Milwaukee www.northwesternmutual.com	4,836	1,027	2.2%	17.1%	2	<b>This insurance and investment firm has 91 employee clubs that offer company-subsidized activities, such as running, skiing, hiking, gardening, fishing and boating.</b> The company offers a pension plan and a 401(k) contribution plan with a 50% match on the last 5% of employee contributions. A business networking lunch program is offered at no cost to all employees and contract staffers. The IT department has a live local career path; employees can promote by expanding their technology knowledge.
16	<b>Hilton Hotels Corp.</b> Beverly Hills, Calif. www.hilton.com	61,504	553	10%	20.2%	15	<b>Hilton operates hotels and resorts in more than 80 countries under brand names such as Hilton, Hampton Inn, Embassy Suites and Conrad.</b> A new IT career plan includes a jobs map that better defines positions and titles and helps supervisors and IT staffers plot their careers. Individual plans were also added to address training needs. Hilton is a generalist sponsor of AACE World L.A. The Team Member Travel Program offers employees discounted room rates and reserved trip packages at any of the almost 2,400 hotels and resorts that the company owns, manages or franchises in the U.S., Mexico and Canada.
17	<b>USAA</b> San Antonio www.usaa.com	21,650	2,340	7%	17%	9	<b>This diversified financial services company offers an enhanced health benefits plan that includes free, on-site health risk assessments and a company-provided personal care account that employees can use to pay upfront medical and prescription expenses.</b> Other perks include an on-site pharmacy, a free personal finance planning program, a flex plan by order match up to 50% of contributions in the 401(k) plan, and a parent-child plan. The company also offers college tuition and expense reimbursement up to \$2,500 annually for full-time employees and \$2,025 annually for part-time employees.
18	<b>Verizon Wireless</b> Basking Ridge, N.J. www.verizonwireless.com	52,000	2,144	3.4%	10%	12	<b>This wireless services provider has approximately 45.5 million customers nationwide.</b> IT staffers are offered three career progression tracks: technology, applications and management. The technical track has a systems development ladder and a technology support ladder that offer promotional opportunities at the way to the level of technical director, which is the equivalent of a departmental director. An annual performance appraisal and plan developed for each employee outlines training objectives for the year, including less than seven technical, three non-technical and two Verizon Wireless product training topics.
19	<b>Marriott International Inc.</b> Washington www.marriott.com	127,064	1,027	8%	6.4%	6	<b>This hotelier has more than 2,700 lodging properties in the U.S. and 85 in other countries and territories.</b> IT staffers are surveyed annually to ensure job satisfaction. In 2005, Marriott IT division experienced voluntary turnover of 5.5%; the average tenure of IT staffers is nine years. A "career journey" development approach gives employees a road map of the skills they need for advancement and the opportunity to work on "converger" teams with business colleagues to develop the skills to move into other functional areas at Marriott.
20	<b>Philip Morris USA Inc.</b> Richmond, Va. www.philipmorrisusa.com	11,594	447	4%	11.6%	5	<b>The maker of Marlboro cigarettes, the world's top-selling cigarette brand, Philip Morris sells its products in 160 countries.</b> IT training, development partners with industry leaders to offer training in new technologies. A leadership program originally developed for the management staff is being developed for the entire IT organization in 2006. IT staffers participate in a deferred profit sharing program in which the company contributes 15% of an employee's eligible compensation and employees can contribute a maximum of 15% of their eligible compensation as well as before or after tax contributions.
21	<b>Tollaks Inc.</b> Naperville, Ill. www.tollaks.com	3,643	108	15%	11.9%	5	<b>Tollaks develops software for telecommunications service providers in more than 100 countries.</b> IT staff selection starts with a leader pool, taking results and a given projects with people who have specific skills. Consultants are also brought in to bring in knowledge and transfer specific knowledge and skills to permanent staffers. The IT department sponsors activities throughout the year to celebrate project milestones and holidays. An IT employee recognition program helps evaluate workers and recognizes top performance within the IT organization. IT staffers work with technologies such as Web reporting, business-to-business and collaboration tools.
22	<b>Harrah's Entertainment Inc.</b> Las Vegas www.harahs.com	106,000	840	13%	16%	10	<b>Professional development opportunities for IT workers at the world's largest gaming company are focused on three primary areas: training, rotational assignments and advancement.</b> IT staffers gain experience and are mentored and encouraged to take on more responsibility. The company's annual career development program, the U.S. Career Development Program, helps employees move through the Employees Life Cycle Framework as a program that follows IT workers from day they are hired, helping them to measure their skills through development and training.

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	BEST PLACE	TOTAL IT EMPLOYEES	% EMPLOYEES EMPLOYED	WHAT'S SPECIAL?			
23	Qualcomm Inc. San Diego <a href="http://www.qualcomm.com">www.qualcomm.com</a>	9,509	915	6.9%	15.1%	3	>> This company boasts the CDMA communications technology and system software it planned to more than 100 equipment and cell phone makers. It offers full medical coverage to all employees and no change. As part of Qualcomm's recognition program, employees can nominate their peers for a "Qualstar" gift certificate that can be used for electronics, home products and other items. Outstanding performance is rewarded with bonus awards and bonuses, an employee stock purchase plan and stock options.
24	Borg Mfg. Hamilton Inc. McLean, Va. <a href="http://www.borgmfg.com">www.borgmfg.com</a>	17,303	218	17%	10%	10	>> This global strategy and technology consulting firm has more than 17,000 employees on six continents and generates annual sales of more than \$2 billion. IT workers are encouraged to view business the company's IT strategy plan, serving customer advisory councils, and on industry councils and associations. The company focuses business needs to identify new career opportunities. Three career tracks that have been added recently are security, service operations and account management.
25	Aflac Inc. Columbus, Ga. <a href="http://www.aflac.com">www.aflac.com</a>	4,207	606	11.7%	10.1%	4	>> One of the largest providers of supplemental medical insurance in the U.S., Aflac boasts more than 40 million people worldwide. Each year, on the Wednesday before Thanksgiving, Aflac gives its workers a profit-sharing bonus equal to a percentage of their annual salaries. In 2005, employees received 5.59% of their annual salaries. Aflac provides a certification reimbursement program for IT workers. Its online learning system includes certification tracks that allow employees to prepare for tests at work or at home. More than 1500 courses were recently added to the e-learning program.
26	Monsanto Co. St. Louis <a href="http://www.monsanto.com">www.monsanto.com</a>	7,500	400	4.9%	6.4%	6	>> Monsanto was re-established in 2000 with a sole focus on plant biotechnology. The IT department's "recognition program" includes three awards programs: the Incredible Talent Award, which recognizes exceptional performance over a number of years; the Vision Award, which recognizes IT workers and teams that have contributed significant value to the business; the Innovation Award, which recognizes employees who are distributed quarterly and the Rapid Response Program, through which anyone in IT can be recognized at any time. The vacation package includes four weeks a year for employees who have been with the company less than five years or longer, plus an additional week during the winter holidays. Monsanto's St. Louis headquarters features an on-site child-care facility and a fitness center.
27	Hess Corp. New York <a href="http://www.hess.com">www.hess.com</a>	10,800	252	4%	11.6%	4	>> This global energy company operates for, produces and refines crude oil and natural gas. It also markets refined petroleum products, natural gas and electricity. Within the IT department, all employees have personal career development plans that tie their skills development to business objectives. Employees are also encouraged to attend training and take on stretch assignments whenever possible. Flexible work arrangements are offered, and, depending on location, employees can take every other Friday off.
28	The Vanguard Group Inc. Valley Forge, Pa. <a href="http://www.vanguard.com">www.vanguard.com</a>	11,308	2,028	3%	7%	6	>> This investment management firm employs more than 2,000 IT workers, who make up 25% of the entire staff. In 2005, the internal promotion rate was 7.4%, and 54% of IT workers who participated in the job rotation program moved within an month of their request. Training includes specialized learning made before every IT position, more than 1000 IT-specific courses and computer-based courses, and a suite of online self-paced courses. Employees are encouraged to attend training and take on stretch assignments. IT department works with voice over IP, RSS, videoconferencing, Web collaboration and portal technologies, as well as other cutting-edge tools.
29	Principal Financial Group Inc. Des Moines <a href="http://www.principal.com">www.principal.com</a>	12,795	1,474	6.9%	6.9%	3	>> This administrator of employer-sponsored retirement plans offers a formal mentoring program, as well as a work-life balance program. The program includes time off for most types of planned and unplanned absences, as well as to complete leave for workers who are having or adopting a baby or providing care to elderly parents or other family members. Flextime is also offered. IT workers can start and end their days earlier or later than a regular schedule, occasionally rotating. A telecommuting option allows employees to work away from the office for all or a portion of a day or week as part of their regular work schedule.
30	Universal Health Services Inc. King of Prussia, Pa. <a href="http://www.uhs.com">www.uhs.com</a>	36,000	348	0%	19%	4	>> One of the largest for-profit hospital operators in the U.S., Universal Health Services owns or operates about 30 acute-care hospitals. The IT department regularly tests and pilots new technologies, including mobile computing at the bedside and RFID technologies for patient identification and tracking of assets and patients. IT task forces include workers from various disciplines and multiple hospitals. IT managers meet regularly to discuss an ongoing technology agenda for themselves and the staff.
31	Partners HealthCare System Inc. Boston <a href="http://www.partners.com">www.partners.com</a>	4,222	1,000	11.3%	13.7%	6	>> Partners HealthCare is a nonprofit organization that includes primary care and specialty physicians, community hospitals, two community medical centers, specialty facilities, community health centers and other health-related entities. With 10 hospitals, including Brigham, Brigham Women's and Massachusetts General, the system has a personal priority program that allows employees to receive up to a 50% reimbursement for select categories of expenses, including gym memberships, adoption, computer purchases, financial planning services and postsecondary tuition for dependents.
32	Raytheon Co. Waltham, Mass. <a href="http://www.raytheon.com">www.raytheon.com</a>	74,193	1,822	10%	19.8%	3	>> This defense contractor makes the Patriot, Hawk and Tomahawk missile systems, radar systems, and communications, targeting and navigation technologies. A knowledge development program helps IT workers at each stage of their careers. Early-career employees grow their skills through a two-year series of business, technical assignments. Mid-career workers are offered internal rotations programs, and a follow-on program offers technical skills development for those who prefer to grow in individual technical contributions. A self-service learning portal is also available to IT workers who want to further develop their skills.
33	Chicago Mercantile Exchange Holdings Inc. Chicago <a href="http://www.cmex.com">www.cmex.com</a>	1,915	821	6.4%	24.6%	6	>> Founded as the Chicago Butter and Egg Board in 1909, the CME became the first publicly traded financial exchange in the U.S. In 2002, with average daily trading volume of 4.2 million contracts, IT employees are offered an hour of training, tuition reimbursement and internal certification courses. The IT department also supports internal learning sessions and has formed a mentoring program. As part of its innovation program, CME awards cash bonuses and other recognition to those employees who apply for and are issued U.S. patents. Employees receive \$1500 per invention per application and are provided legal and patent writing funding by CME. In 2005, CME paid more than \$63,000 in innovation awards to over 40 employees.
34	MasterCard International Inc. Purchase, N.Y. <a href="http://www.mastercard.com">www.mastercard.com</a>	2,904	1,700	6.6%	16.5%	9	>> This credit card company is owned by its 25,000 franchise members worldwide. Training within the IT group includes leadership and team development and online business and technical training classes. Communication skills include a periodic breakfast chat with the head of IT, quarterly all-employee meetings and monthly face-to-face meetings with speakers from across the company. The benefits package and salaries target the 75th percentile nationally. In-house training and support for certifications, seminars, trade shows and formal education programs are offered. Work-life balance options include reduced work schedules, flexible scheduling and telecommuting.
35	Cerner Corp. Kansas City, Mo. <a href="http://www.cerner.com">www.cerner.com</a>	8,252	3,760	14%	29%	14	>> Cerner sells clinical, financial and administrative information management applications. Career tracks offer growth and development in both technical and management roles. A career navigation center offers career assessments and coaching, and formal development programs for individual contributors and executives include self-paced, self-directed learning and development. An on-site athletic facility features an indoor pool, a cardio court, a gym, a weight lifting area, racquetball courts and exercise classes. There is also a Montessori facility for employee children. An on-site primary care clinic offers free care, full laboratory services and an on-site pharmacy.
36	Amgen Family Healthcare Group Mendota, Wis. <a href="http://www.amgen.com">www.amgen.com</a>	8,279	1,048	2.5%	7.9%	8	>> This medical insurance company offers employee reimbursement for college tuition, technical certifications and other continuing education programs. Self-reimbursement and career advancement courses are offered on- and off-site. Several hundred online learning courses on IT and business-related topics, such as Java programming and new business models, are available. An on-site program lists individual financial bonuses with the company's business goals. IT employees are encouraged to bring forward proposals to test a new technology or idea. If the results are positive, workers are granted work time (up to 200 hours and funding up to \$60,000) to test that idea.

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- 600 x 600 dpi max resolution
- High-speed USB, Ethernet, Fast Ethernet
- 1-year warranty

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Revised Product 6, 2005

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# The Tops

The top 10 lists below show the very best of the best:

	Overall:	Diversity:	Career development:
<b>Training:</b>	1. <a href="#">IBM</a>	1. <a href="#">IBM</a>	1. <a href="#">IBM</a>
<b>Benefits:</b>	1. <a href="#">IBM</a>	1. <a href="#">IBM</a>	1. <a href="#">IBM</a>

DIVERSITY		TRAINING		CAREER DEVELOPMENT		RETENTION		BENEFITS	
1	University of Illinois	1	General Social Security Administration	1	Chicago Healthcare Exchange Holdings Inc.	1	Wethers Farm Sports Properties Inc.	1	Bank of America Inc.
2	Black-Style Group	2	Black Inkjet	2	Primer Inc.	2	Adelphi LLC	2	University of Southern California
3	Public-Style Group	3	Black Inkjet	3	University of Illinois	3	University of Illinois	3	University of Illinois
4	The Digital Group Inc.	4	University of Illinois	4	University of Illinois	4	University of Illinois	4	University of Illinois
5	Black-Style Group	5	The Digital Group Inc.	5	University of Illinois	5	University of Illinois	5	University of Illinois
6	Black-Style Group	6	Black-Style Group	6	Black-Style Group	6	Black-Style Group	6	Black-Style Group
7	Black-Style Group	7	Black-Style Group	7	Black-Style Group	7	Black-Style Group	7	Black-Style Group
8	Black-Style Group	8	Black-Style Group	8	Black-Style Group	8	Black-Style Group	8	Black-Style Group
9	Black-Style Group	9	Black-Style Group	9	Black-Style Group	9	Black-Style Group	9	Black-Style Group
10	Black-Style Group	10	Black-Style Group	10	Black-Style Group	10	Black-Style Group	10	Black-Style Group

	BEST PLACE	TOTAL IT EMPLOYED	IT EMPLOYED PER FTE	WHAT'S SPECIAL?			
37	Ohio Savings Bank Cleveland <a href="http://www.ohiosavings.com">www.ohiosavings.com</a>	2,541	280	10%	6.2%	6	<p>» Founded in 1900, <b>Ohio Savings Bank</b> has more than 50 branches and loan offices. The IT department participates in early adoption programs with vendors to give workers access to leading-edge technology. The recent workweek for IT workers is 40 to 50 hours, with flexible and part-time hours possible. Salaries and bonuses work more like a merit plan than a salary schedule in each month. Most IT staffers have the option of working remotely when necessary. The company recently initiated a monetary reward policy for employees with perfect annual attendance. There's an on-site fitness center, and an on-site wellness clinic staffed by a nurse and dietitian offers flu shots, mammograms and other services.</p>
38	Nisqually Pharmaceuticals Corp. East Hanover, N.J. <a href="http://www.nisqually.com">www.nisqually.com</a>	11,722	408	8%	12.3%	10	<p>» The U.S. arm of Swiss drug giant <b>Nisqually</b> and the maker of <b>Elavon</b> and <b>Elavil</b>, <b>Nisqually Pharmaceuticals</b> has an award program to recognize IT workers who use diversity as a guiding principle in their work. A diversity action team has been developed and a plan for regular communications including managing creativity and collaboration, identifying new perspectives and creating a culture of openness and respect. Project-based bonuses are included in project budgets and are geared to IT staffers for completing major initiatives that significantly benefit the company. Celebratory events are also held for the achievement of project milestones. For delivery of key initiatives and the discovery of new innovations and best practices, employees are eligible for IT business excellence awards.</p>
39	BNSF Railway Co. Fort Worth, Texas <a href="http://www.bnsf.com">www.bnsf.com</a>	40,218	480	4%	6.3%	10	<p>» This freight transportation provider has a network of 32,000 miles of track in the western U.S. and Canada. Employees in conjunction with their business goals, create career development plans that might include formal education through BNSF's tuition reimbursement or MBA programs, training, learning and talent management, and development of equipment, such as promotions within the IT organization and between IT and support groups. A business skills curriculum includes course work in finance, strategic management, business process analysis, effective decision-making and strategic planning. The company offers two formal flexible work arrangements - part-time work and flexi-commuting - and in coverages, the use of other flexible arrangements where appropriate. Employees have 11 paid holidays and can earn up to five weeks of vacation a year.</p>
40	J.R. Bond Transport Services Inc. Lincoln, Ark. <a href="http://www.jrbond.net">www.jrbond.net</a>	16,700	310	8%	10%	10	<p>» One of the largest truckload carriers in the U.S., <b>J.R. Bond</b> has a fleet of trailers, trailers and containers and provides dry-van truckload services throughout the U.S. and in Canada and Mexico. The company operates team-building activities such as "Obstacle" - a challenge course and a cardboard boat race. IT employees are encouraged to take part in community charitable activities, including Habitat for Humanity projects. Full tuition reimbursement is offered, as well as continuing learning and education opportunities. Other career opportunities include career development facilities.</p>
41	Publix Super Markets Inc. Lakeland, Fla. <a href="http://www.publix.com">www.publix.com</a>	136,000	950	0.5%	25%	14	<p>» One of the largest privately owned supermarket operators in the U.S., <b>Publix</b> has 875 stores in Florida, Alabama, Georgia, South Carolina and Tennessee. IT businesses segment go provides customer management and advice to business units, and IT and executive group provides governance and strategic planning. The company has a reputation for high-growth IT initiatives. More than 40% of IT workers have 10 or more years of service at Publix. The company gives holiday bonuses to eligible workers; salaried workers earn a month's salary as a holiday bonus during a calendar cycle year. Workers can also choose to trade up to a week of bonus pay for additional vacation time.</p>
42	Sutter Health Sacramento, Calif. <a href="http://www.sutterhealth.org">www.sutterhealth.org</a>	42,611	948	7%	10%	9	<p>» Organized in 1986 through the merger of <b>Sutter Health</b> and <b>California Healthcare Systems</b>, this is one of the nation's largest not-for-profit health care systems. The IT group recently completed an MPLS network expansion in anticipation of a new electronic health record system to be implemented within the next two years. The company allocates annually \$4,000 per employee per year for training and encourages participation in industry conferences and the pursuit of professional credentials.</p>
43	Paychex Inc. Rochester, N.Y. <a href="http://www.paychex.com">www.paychex.com</a>	10,607	864	6.3%	10%	15	<p>» This payroll accounting firm processes the payroll for about 900,000 clients. A recent IT project increased the efficiency of the human resources department by decreasing manual involvement in the annual recalculation, creating an electronic lead to track and transfer data to insurance carriers, and creating Web portals to allow client self-administration for clients and client employees. The company offers IT staff flexible working arrangements, such as a 9/80 program. All employees are given one paid day off per year for community service. As IT team developers and tested a plan to ensure that Human Resource Managers increased their check accuracy and on time. In six weeks, the team processed more than 27,000 greater-level checks.</p>

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## Windows Server is the leading platform for UNIX migrations.

Based on our primary research, Windows Server is the leading platform for UNIX migration. In fact, 45% of the volume of Windows Server purchases is by those migrating UNIX workloads. This represents an average of more than 35 workloads per migration, which does. As a result, IDC believes that Windows Server is the expert that UNIX users look to when migrating UNIX workloads today. To learn more, visit [www.microsoft.com/WindowsServer/UNIXMigration](http://www.microsoft.com/WindowsServer/UNIXMigration).

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Windows Server 2003

	BEST PLACE	TOTAL IT EMPLOYED	% EMPLOYED	% EMPLOYED	WHAT'S SPECIAL?		
44	Nemours Jacksonville, Fla. <a href="http://www.nemours.com">www.nemours.com</a>	4,231	224	10%	14%	5	>> One of the nation's largest children's health systems, Nemours employs more than 460 pediatric physicians, subspecialists and surgeons, and it cares for approximately a quarter of a million children in 2005. IT staffers work on projects such as a computerized physician order entry system, pharmaceutical technology and systems for tracking and monitoring patients. Another initiative involved the expansion of the data warehouse to provide business intelligence tools. Benefits include free health care for all children of eligible employees and cash-on-hand and long-term care options. IT employees use wireless access and wireless technologies to communicate from remote locations and structure their responsibilities around their personal lives. IT staffers can also use voice over IP technology to answer office phones from home.
45	Ernst & Young Lyndhurst, N.J. <a href="http://www.ey.com">www.ey.com</a>	24,353	1,118	5.5%	10%	3	>> This U.S. division of Ernst & Young International provides accounting, consulting, tax and legal services from its offices throughout the U.S. The IT group evaluates and recommends the latest technologies, including mobile computing services, reporting applications and remote connectivity services. IT staffers are offered formal training, as well as varied work assignments that provide on-the-job learning. Benefits programs include flexible work arrangements, elder care, backup child care, tuition reimbursement, employee discounts, full technology support, profit-sharing accounts for dependent care and uncovered medical expenses, a virtual bonus program and a concierge service.
46	Bain & Behring Overland Park, Kan. <a href="http://www.bainandbehring.com">www.bainandbehring.com</a>	3,324	148	6.1%	11.5%	2	>> The IT group of this diagnostic testing lab makes supports more than 8,000 employees and operations in 34 countries and serves more than 25,000 customers worldwide. IT competencies span all of the skills, knowledge and abilities that staffers need to be successful in this lab. In 2005, 15,594 of U.S. based IT employees received promotions. U.S. based IT employees are offered flexible scheduling. The executive team travels to a different site each month to meet with employees and hosts quarterly town hall meetings open to the global IT organization. Employees use online collaboration tools such as QuickPlace. Summer, instant messaging and the company intranet. Bain & Behring's short-term disability benefit, which is available upon hire and funded by the company, provides 100% income replacement for six months.
47	COWI Corp. Vernon Hills, Ill. <a href="http://www.cowiconsulting.com">www.cowiconsulting.com</a>	4,300	208	10%	8%	6	>> This technology retailer sells more than 190,000 computer products, primarily through catalogs, phone sales and its Web site. COWI offers employees on-site subsidized child care, adoption assistance, domestic partner benefits and a confidential employee assistance program. The company also offers an on-site gym and laundry services. Breakfast is provided for employees twice a week, and there's a car concierge on Wednesdays in the summer. Remote access is offered to eligible employees so they can work from home. All IT staffers have career development plans that managers review with the CIO. Other benefits include tuition reimbursement, customized training programs, paid day off for community service and a charitable donation match program. In 2005, COWI and its employees raised more than \$600,000 in donations and matching funds for relief organizations.
48	U.S. Postal Service Washington <a href="http://www.usps.com">www.usps.com</a>	706,000	1,214	7.9%	8.9%	15	>> Each day, the USPS delivers mail to nearly 160 million homes, businesses and post office boxes, serves 7.8 million customers at its retail outlets and delivers an average of five pieces of mail to each address. The IT department supports more than 325,000 users, 175,000 desktop computers, 650 network applications and 30,000 e-mail and web applications. It also handles \$5.5 million Web site hits each day. When in office, the IT group supports more than 175,000 desktop computers and maintains nearly 100% network availability. IT employee performance is tracked and reviewed via a suite of Web-enabled performance tracking and compensation systems. An employee connectivity program helps them purchase state-of-the-art PC devices from select vendors at reduced rates.
49	United Parcel Service of America Inc. Atlanta <a href="http://www.ups.com">www.ups.com</a>	348,400	4,582	4%	12%	4	>> All IT projects at this package delivery company are prioritized based on the strength of their business cases, and on IT governance committee consensus day-to-day operations. In 2005, IT staffers donated nearly \$844,000 to the United Way and exceeded more than 72,000 volunteer hours locally as part of the company's volunteer program. UPS donated \$2.5 million to the Hurricane Katrina recovery effort while setting up a disaster relief fund to assist employees who were affected by the storm. Staffers can purchase UPS stock at a 10% discount through profit-sharing deductions. An education assistance program helps workers with personal advancement, self-development and advancement within UPS. A mentoring program has begun in 2005 to match 340 pairs of participants.
50	Total System Services Inc. Columbus, Ga. <a href="http://www.tss.com">www.tss.com</a>	6,370	2,728	8%	20%	5	>> A subsidiary of Symantec Financial Corp., this U.S.-based credit card transaction processor serves bank and private-label card holders. With offices in Atlanta, Dallas and Chicago, IT staffers are offered training and career development opportunities and tuition assistance based on performance to earn undergraduate or graduate degrees in various IT and business fields. IT employees are encouraged to find their niche - either working face-to-face with clients or behind a computer. The company offers profit sharing, monthly purchase program and 401(k) plans. Based on the financial performance of the company, employees can receive up to 2% of annual salary based on their plans.
51	Vision Service Plan San Jose, Calif. <a href="http://www.vision.com">www.vision.com</a>	1,900	226	11%	7.8%	4	>> Communication is a top priority at this age-wage benefits provider, which has 44 million members. A new "new members program" for 2005 included on-site meetings, Lunch & Learn, staff and client round-table meetings, surveys and focus groups, weekly contributions on the company intranet and a year-round schedule of open houses. All new IT employees are informed and connected. Many IT staffers are on the corporate softball or cycling teams. A quarter of participants in the mentoring program are from IT.
52	Southern California Edison Rosemead, Calif. <a href="http://www.sce.com">www.sce.com</a>	14,828	1,125	4%	10%	6	>> This subsidiary of Edison International provides power delivery services more than 80,000 square miles. The IT group tracks the skills of staffers through a "role framework" that identifies skill training opportunities, both within IT and in a corporate level, and develops individual development plans that are rolled out with each employee's performance appraisal. IT managers are taught to use the framework for performance appraisal and to coach staffers in their career development. A formal survey helps employees select activities with their work environment. An executive-sponsored team reviews the findings and develops an action plan.
53	L.L. Bean Inc. Freeport, Maine <a href="http://www.llbean.com">www.llbean.com</a>	3,086	218	3%	8%	6	>> This outdoor apparel and gear maker was founded in 1912 by Leon Leonwood Bean and is now controlled by his descendants. The company mails more than 200 million catalogs per year and operates half a dozen retail stores and about 14 factory outlets throughout the Northeast. Employees profits include product discounts and a lottery for the use of the wilderness areas owned and maintained by L.L. Bean. All professional and management employees are entitled to up to two paid days to participate in outdoor activities such as hunting, fishing, kayaking and cycling.
54	Discover Financial Services LLC Riverwoods, Ill. <a href="http://www.discover.com">www.discover.com</a>	13,445	1,837	10%	10%	5	>> A business segment of Morgan Stanley, this company issues the Discover-brand credit cards, which are used by more 80 million members. Training opportunities include instructor-led classes, on-line training and monthly lunch sessions with in-house subject matter experts, a formalized mentoring program, coaching and team-development workshops, and on-site technical and management training courses. The average workweek for IT employees is 40 hours, and flexible scheduling and summer hours are offered. A 19,000 square foot fitness center has full-service strength training, a cardiovascular training area, personal trainers, massages and classes. Outdoor facilities include basketball and volleyball courts and a 1.8-mile running trail.
55	Thomson West Eagan, Minn. <a href="http://www.thomson.com">www.thomson.com</a>	10,214	1,548	6.9%	8.9%	12	>> This subsidiary of The Thomson Corp. provides online information and research services to the U.S. legal market. One high-profile IT project involved migrating from a mainframe environment to an XML-based, distributed environment with their staffs of 100,000 users. The IT group also recently completed a multi-million-dollar expansion of the company's data centers, replacing capacity Enbridge can purchase Thomson stock at discounted rates and receive discounts in 40 hours, and flexible scheduling and summer hours are offered. The company also offers tuition reimbursement and a scholarship program for employees' children. In 2005, IT employees received \$340,027 in reimbursements.



# Top Fives

## Flexible schedules and formal feedback:

work/life balance programs

Competitive salaries

Formal mentoring programs

Formal mentoring programs

## flexible work hours

formally evaluates their managers

formal mentoring programs

INDUSTRIES	MOST OFFERED BENEFITS	LEAST OFFERED BENEFITS	RETENTION METHODS	SPONSORED ACTIVITIES
1	1	1	1	1
2	2	2	2	2
3	3	3	3	3
4	4	4	4	4
5	5	5	5	5

WHERE ARE  
THE 100 BEST  
PLACES?

Middle Atlantic

Mountain

New England

North Central

South Central

Pacific

South Atlantic

## EMPLOYEE OF THE MONTH



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# Top Fives

**Flexible schedules and formal feedback:** For the second year in a row, **flexible work hours** and **work/life balance programs** ranked first and fourth, respectively, among the top retention methods used by Best Places companies. **Competitive salaries and benefits** consistently top the list. Feedback goes both ways: for nearly half of Best Places companies, 48% of IT employees **formally evaluate their managers** each year. And a majority of companies (55%) report grooming the next generation of IT with **formal mentoring programs**.

1	1	1	1	1
2	2	2	2	2
3	3	3	3	3
4	4	4	4	4
5	5	5	5	5

Middle Atlantic

Mountain

New England

North Central

South Central

Pacific

South Atlantic

JULY



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## BEST PLACE

TRAINING  
COMPUTERIT EMPLOYEES  
RANKED

## WHAT'S SPECIAL?

56	Northern Trust Corp. Chicago <a href="http://www.northerntrust.com">www.northerntrust.com</a>	9,076	901	5%	10th	5	» This northeast banking company has offices in 10 states and 11 countries. Northern Trust has a centrally managed technology group, which enhances opportunities for cross-training. Employees are aligned with business units to connect with clients and products. Weekly teleconferencing includes alternative work schedules, remote working options and career tracks for part-time employees. Some flexible options include 100-hour days, or nine-hour days with an extra day off every other week. Some IT personnel, including trainers, work from home a few days per month or even part week, and a few work remotely full-time.
57	KPMG LLP New York <a href="http://www.kpmg.com">www.kpmg.com</a>	20,212	900	12.4%	8.5th	5	» The "summer jump-start" program at this U.S. member firm of PwC International, one of accounting's Big Four, allows all employees to leave at 8 p.m. on Fridays during the summer months. More than 1500 training courses are offered to IT staffers. There's also a formal mentoring program, which enrolls 100 IT employees. A new share-based program gives IT workers the ability to transfer vacation time that they might otherwise lose to other staffers during emergency situations and bereavement. Over the past two years, KPMG employees have donated more than 12,000 hours to the program.
58	Edward D. Jones & Co. St. Louis <a href="http://www.edj.com">www.edj.com</a>	30,916	1,610	8%	10.7th	4	» Turnover among the IT results at this financial services firm was just 7% last year, a big improvement. The IT group offers "responsibility statements" after their job descriptions, and includes the workspace for routers and keyboards alike. Flexible work assignments include job-sharing, working on-site, or working longer hours and fewer days. The firm has not had any layoffs since 1993. When the operations unit moved about 120 jobs to a campus in Tampa, Ala., workers could move to Arizona or transition to different jobs in St. Louis.
59	Eastman Chemical Co. Kingsport, Tenn. <a href="http://www.emc.com">www.emc.com</a>	10,359	343	5%	7th	7	» Divided into three business segments, this manufacturer produces chemicals, fibers and plastics. The IT group receives training and gains experience in the latest technologies, including e-commerce. Web applications, service-oriented architecture and Web services. Rotating assignments outside of IT are offered. IT professionals can choose whether to advance as a technical leader or a more general leader. Flexible work schedules include the option to work from home using company-provided high-speed Internet access.
60	Ford Motor Co. Dearborn, Mich. <a href="http://www.ford.com">www.ford.com</a>	124,270	3,500	3.7%	10th	20	» This auto giant manufactures the Ford Focus, Ford Focus, Lincoln, Mercury and Volvo brands. IT employees are involved in researching and developing applications for Ford vehicles, such as streaming audio and video, Web 2.0 capabilities, GPS navigation, Internet search and Web 2.0. Super users meet regularly to discuss employees' developmental needs and provide learning opportunities, stretch assignments and career goals. Employees are often paired with technical partners. Employee resource groups include the Ford Hispanic Network, the Ford African American Network, the IT Diversity Action Team and IT Women in Leadership. Through the Ford Volunteer Corps, IT employees can take on voluntary international service assignments that last two to five years.
61	National Information Solutions Cooperative Inc. Lake St. Louis, Mo. <a href="http://www.nisc.com">www.nisc.com</a>	562	375	4%	10th	10	» NISC provides data processing services and billing software for the energy and telecommunications industries. A comprehensive needs plan is provided to employees and their families at no cost, and NISC sponsors 100% of tuition for employees who are one year of service. Educational opportunities include lunchtime learning sessions, on-site and computer-based training, e-LEARNING, NISC's award-winning e-learning facility, and the National IT Learning Center. Employees are encouraged to take courses and earn certifications in NISC software. The company offers an employee-advanced development fund designed to help employees and their families in times of need or tragedy that employees can contribute to through payroll deductions, with matching contributions from NISC.
62	Allstate Insurance Co. Northbrook, Ill. <a href="http://www.allstate.com">www.allstate.com</a>	37,216	4,071	8%	9th	15	» Allstate is the second-largest U.S. personal finance, selling auto, homeowner's and life insurance in Canada and the U.S. The IT group provides training allowances, sponsors training events on-site and encourages job rotations to keep IT closely aligned with the business. IT employees helped expand the company's tech workers with remote tools that have made them more mobile and increased their speed in solving customer issues. Employees are given desktop tools, Web conferencing, mobile applications and planning tools software to help them work remotely. Flexible work schedules are offered, as well as on-site IT training and online learning. Personal services include on-site services such as car care, gym, childcare and convenience stores.
63	Comerica Inc. Detroit <a href="http://www.comerica.com">www.comerica.com</a>	11,000	700	4.5%	10th	7	» Each of the senior IT managers at this bank holding company hosts a monthly luncheon to discuss diversity issues. All IT employees have a requirement in their annual performance plan to complete a "Web 4.0" session - a structured learning activity that matches IT workers with key clients. The Information Services Activity Committee was formed shortly after a large merger to enable the transition from one host to another. The group has expanded its charter and now helps to enhance the work environment through social activities and community service, planning events such as casual days, Halloween costume contests and employee appreciation days.
64	Sallie Mae Boston, Va. <a href="http://www.sallie.com">www.sallie.com</a>	10,899	901	7%	10th	2	» The No. 1 source of education loans in the U.S., Sallie has strengthened the working relationship between IT and business operations with periodic shifts of IT workers into business units and of business workers into IT. The IT division implements the IT Infrastructure Unit. The company's IT infrastructure unit is the primary support for the company's operations of the Zachry framework to guide service-oriented architecture and IT investment decisions. All employees work about 40 hours.
65	Quest Diagnostics Inc. Lynbrook, N.J. <a href="http://www.questdiagnostics.com">www.questdiagnostics.com</a>	42,000	1,547	8%	10th	4	» This clinical laboratory company provides diagnostic services to physicians and patients around the clock. Most IT employees work the shift and can start their workdays as early as 6 a.m. or as late as 8 p.m. Second and third shifts ensure that all patients are served. IT employees are often asked to work on-site. Quest offers medical, dental, life and short- and long-term disability insurance, flexible spending accounts and employee assistance programs. In May 2005, the company started the Healthy Quest initiative, which includes diagnostic medical screenings for employees and their partners. Another benefit allows employees to accrue hours that can be used for vacation, personal needs and retirement time. Based on years of service, employees can accrue up to 30 days annually for personal use.
66	PHH Mortgage Corp. Mt. Laurel, N.J. <a href="http://www.phh.com">www.phh.com</a>	3,688	301	12.6%	10.3th	3	» Loans and mortgage are typical offers at this residential mortgage company, a division of PNC Corp. IT employees are offered flexible schedules and have Internet reimbursement averaging \$600 annually. Other perks include gym memberships and full-service medical centers in every building. As for the wellness center offers like blood pressure screenings and flu shots. Employees are eligible to adopt reimbursement of up to \$5,000 per child, domestic partner benefits, and tuition reimbursement of \$4,000 annually for undergraduate level and \$8,000 annually for the graduate level. All monthly leadership meetings with the IT group, the ODQ introduces new technologies, presents projects and initiatives, and encourages employees to ask questions. Each major functional business area has an advocate who acts as the IT liaison and directly serves IT employees to be engaged in business projects, initiatives and process re-engineering.
67	Raymond James Financial Inc. St. Petersburg, Fla. <a href="http://www.rj.com">www.rj.com</a>	5,324	720	11.8%	14.4th	4	» The IT department at this investment and financial planning provider has created systems for regulatory compliance alerts, business intelligence, enhanced trade confirmations, internet-based research and imaging workflows. Training opportunities include industry- and technology-related courses, membership in professional associations, the opportunity to attend conferences, and a mentoring program. IT employees are given time off to help others in the community and to participate in special company events and activities, such as a half-marathon (donating a minimum of \$100 to charity) and a charity golf tournament. IT workers with more senior roles can help in the accelerator program. All employees receive a securities discount on trades.
68	National Rural Electric Cooperative Association Arlington, Va. <a href="http://www.nreca.org">www.nreca.org</a>	700	110	7%	25th	10	» The NRECA represents member-owned power companies. For the third consecutive year, results from the Gallup Q12 Employee Engagement Survey, which measures workplace satisfaction, put IT workers in the 95th percentile relative to the BSE database. IT employees work with the latest technology, including wireless and desktop systems. Noted network architecture, advanced facility technologies, multimedia Web applications and more. The company offers IT staffers training and educational assistance, including tuition reimbursement, in any given year, about 15% of IT employees receive tuition reimbursement.

Continued on page 64

Dell recommends Windows® XP Professional



NEW DELL LATITUDE D620 NOTEBOOKS  
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INTEL CENTRINO DUO MOBILE TECHNOLOGY



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## Satisfaction

Morale among employees at the Best Places to Work in IT is running high — as is the stress:

Excellent  
Very good  
Good  
Fair  
Poor

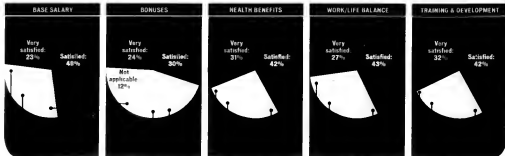
## IT DEPARTMENT MORALE

10%  
33%  
26%  
15%  
7%

## WORKPLACE STRESS LEVEL

Very stressful  
Stressful  
Somewhat stressful  
Not very stressful  
Not at all stressful

9%  
24%  
46%  
18%  
3%



Grant Thornton is looking for **people who love what they do.**



We look for people with passion for what they do because, frankly, their enthusiasm makes coming to work every day enjoyable.

Grant Thornton's culture emphasizes professionalism, individuality, and diversity. And our passion for work-life balance helps get the job done while ensuring time for everything else. Grant Thornton LLP is the U.S. member firm of Grant Thornton International, one of the six global accounting, tax, and business advisory organizations.

After 82 years in business we are still growing, and we're leading in innovation and the delivery of cutting-edge technology to our employees. We currently have openings in:

- web and application development
- engineering
- infrastructure support
- business analysis
- project management
- enterprise architecture
- enterprise content management (ECM) development
- data analysis
- business intelligence development

The majority of our IT positions are located in Oakbrook Terrace, Illinois. Other positions are available in some of the 50 Grant Thornton offices located throughout the U.S. Grant Thornton is looking to hire information technology specialists who are the best in the business. People who love what they do!

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# Satisfaction

Morale among employees at the Best Places to Work in IT is running high — as in the streets:

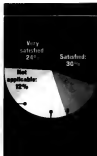
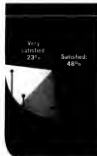
Excellent  
Very good  
Good  
Fair  
Poor

## IT DEPARTMENT MORALE

96%  
83%  
20%  
10%  
7%

## WORKPLACE STRESS LEVEL

Very stressful 3%  
Stressful 34%  
Somewhat stressful 40%  
Not very stressful 19%  
Not at all stressful 3%



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**"One of the Most Admired Pharmaceutical Companies in America"**

*- Fortune®*

**"Top 100 Companies for Working Mothers"**

*- Working Mother*

**"100 Best Places for Latinos to Work"**

*- Hispanic Magazine*

**"One of the Top-Rated Companies in Corporate Equality"**

*- Human Rights Campaign*

**"Top Corporation for Women-Owned Businesses"**

*- Women's Business Enterprise National Council*



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	BEST PLACE	TOTAL IT EMPLOYED	% OF EMPLOYEES	# OF COMPAREE FIRMS	WHAT'S SPECIAL?		
69	<b>HSBC North America Holdings Inc.</b> Prospect Heights, Ill. <a href="http://www.hsbc.com">www.hsbc.com</a>	47,335	3,430	6.6%	9.3%	9	<b>&gt;&gt; A subsidiary of HSBC Holding PLC, this company offers personal and commercial banking, mortgage, consumer services, private banking, insurance and corporate investment banking services.</b> Career development opportunities include training and coaching, and technical and nontechnical classes on subjects such as internal controls, project management and mentoring. The Catch a Case on the HSC Express, or CACE, program lets new employees meet members of the HSB, technology and services career management team and employees from different areas of the technology unit. Employees learn about career development, training, networking and the internal controlling model. More than 1,000 Web-based classes are offered.
70	<b>University of Oklahoma</b> Norman, Okla. <a href="http://www.uo.edu">www.uo.edu</a>	11,000	177	5%	3%	5	<b>&gt;&gt; Created by the Oklahoma Turnover Legislation in 2000, the University of Oklahoma is a doctoral-degree-granting research university, with 29 colleges and more than 38,000 students.</b> Employees are eligible for tuition reimbursement and have the opportunity to hold adjunct faculty positions. Cultural enrichment opportunities include access to campus art and natural history museums. Family-friendly benefits include flexible schedules, scholarship programs for employees' dependents and on-site day care. Academic, administrative and student-related leadership development and mentoring programs are also offered. Annual IT staff events recognize exceptional performance, community service and leadership winners receive bonuses.
71	<b>Antares Management Solutions Inc.</b> Westlake, Ohio <a href="http://www.amsolutions.com">www.amsolutions.com</a>	507	367	8.6%	8.8%	9	<b>&gt;&gt; Benefits at this IT and business process outsourcing firm include prescription drug coverage, flexible spending accounts and retirement plans.</b> Other perks include employee assistance programs, on-site fitness centers or discounts on memberships to local health clubs. Weight Watchers programs, free health screenings and brown-bag lunch sessions that address topics such as stress management. A new, more flexible telecommuting option allows IT workers to perform their daily tasks home as an Internet connection and a VPN. The company also offers tuition assistance, certification reimbursement, on-site training, a computer loan, a project management program and computer-based training on subjects such as desktop applications and programming languages.
72	<b>Temple University</b> Philadelphia <a href="http://www.temple.edu">www.temple.edu</a>	5,433	242	4.5%	5%	5	<b>&gt;&gt; This Philadelphia university enrolls more than 34,000 students and has 17 schools and colleges.</b> Recent technology initiatives include the development of identity management, data warehousing and disaster recovery systems, as well as a tool for tracking research projects. IT workers have also received enhanced training in Oracle, Linux and Microsoft systems. Benefits offered include tuition benefits, including full undergraduate tuition for dependent children, access to health club facilities and participation in a full range of university programs. The IT group has its own internal training department that provides courses to help individuals develop in their chosen areas of expertise. Recently, IT staffers completed TCP/IP training, and 40 completed project management training.
73	<b>Schneider National Inc.</b> Green Bay, Wis. <a href="http://www.schneider.com">www.schneider.com</a>	20,505	434	9.3%	3%	5	<b>&gt;&gt; This truckload and intermodal service company provides worldwide bulk balance programs, including flexible work options and a free commuting service for help with personal children and special needs, including child care, elder care, pet care, parking, college alternatives for children and travel/reimbursement to retirement funds.</b> In 2003, Schneider was recognized as an AARP Focused Employer for its commitment to recruiting, hiring and retaining older workers. IT workers in the military receive full pay and benefits for up to 18 months while they are on active duty. In addition, each worker in the military is assigned a heavily sponsored spouse from the company who stays in touch with them, family or spouse to assist with benefits questions, family issues and other matters.
74	<b>State Street Corp.</b> Boston <a href="http://www.statestreet.com">www.statestreet.com</a>	12,904	2,764	1%	28.3%	3	<b>&gt;&gt; This Boston-based financial services firm spends 20% to 25% of its operating budget each year on technology.</b> Employees are offered flexible work arrangements, including the opportunity to work from home or an alternate location. IT managers assist employees in their career growth and identify and develop job performance. Individual career plans are designed to help employees develop a range of competencies for improved depth and breadth of departmental knowledge. Managers are required to evaluate employees semiannually. At State Street Global Advisors, the investment management arm of State Street Corp., an IT career development and mentorship program includes 30-year round internships and ongoing opportunities for employee advancement. Employees receive tuition, lunchtime learning workshops, and training in written and verbal communication, project management, Web technology and securities industry subjects.
75	<b>Calence LLC</b> Tempe, Ariz. <a href="http://www.calence.com">www.calence.com</a>	321	321	5%	33%	5	<b>&gt;&gt; Formed this year through the merger of Calence Inc. and Annet Enterprise Solutions, this IT company builds and maintains voice, video, data and wireless networks for financial services firms, health care organizations and public schools.</b> IT employees learn the latest technologies, including Calence's own networking technologies, and build IT systems in advanced environments. The company supports IT workers getting certifications and pays compensation rates to industry standards. It also sponsors team events and fosters a culture of teamwork.
76	<b>Miami-Dade County</b> Miami <a href="http://www.miamidade.com">www.miamidade.com</a>	623	623	4.5%	5%	21	<b>&gt;&gt; One of the largest municipal governments in the southeastern U.S., serving some 2 million residents, Miami-Dade offers its employees medical, dental and vision coverage, and discounts on products and services such as computers, car rentals and admission to sporting events.</b> Work areas in the human capital have been reduced in recent years with new contracting and internal efforts to reduce costs. Report IT projects include the development of a system to improve the computer-aided dispatch of 911 calls, a new Web portal and the county's 38 Answer Center. Workers receive a single point of contact for information about many county services. The 381 center's number became the hot line for citizens in the aftermath of hurricanes Katrina and Wilma and has received more than 1 million calls since its launch. The county is seeking to expand telecommuting options for IT workers.
77	<b>Sharp HealthCare</b> San Diego <a href="http://www.sharp.com">www.sharp.com</a>	13,343	300	1%	7%	5	<b>&gt;&gt; This group of hospitals and health care facilities in the San Diego area includes four acute-care and three specialty hospitals.</b> Employees work on projects that cover a range of technologies, including electronic medical records, digital radiology imaging, wireless, biometrics and Web technologies. Employees gather three times a year for food and fun - at a summer picnic, a Thanksgiving picnic and a winter holiday lunch. IT department holds quarterly meetings to help employees stay connected.
78	<b>W W Grainger Inc.</b> Lake Forest, Ill. <a href="http://www.grainger.com">www.grainger.com</a>	15,550	300	2.7%	4%	5	<b>&gt;&gt; Grainger distributes supplies such as compressors, motors, signs, lighting and building equipment, and hand and power tools through 260 branches and 20 distribution centers in the U.S., Canada and Mexico.</b> The IT department's performance management program emphasizes ongoing development of hard and soft skills and supports an alignment of IT resources to corporate objectives and results. IT employees recently completed an enterprise-wide SAP project with applications running on Linux. Supporting the SAP environment is a new nationwide communications network that uses VoIP technologies.
79	<b>Discovery Communications Inc.</b> Silver Spring, Md. <a href="http://www.discovery.com">www.discovery.com</a>	3,508	382	6.3%	16.8%	1	<b>&gt;&gt; The company reaches 80 million households through its Discovery Channel, The Learning Channel, The Travel Channel and Animal Planet cable networks, and it operates Discovery Channel retail stores.</b> Discovery's TeleWork Strategies team offers more than 40 programs for health and wellness, employee and family services, workplace flexibility, community involvement and management support. In late 2004, an on-site, full-service wellness center opened, staffed with medical professionals who serve as primary care physicians. It offers specialty services such as on-site mammograms, physical exams and complete blood work, free of charge. Each summer, Discovery sponsors an Employee Walk Challenge Competition to promote healthy lifestyles through exercise, nutrition and overall personal wellness.
80	<b>The Rooms! Group</b> Pleasantville, N.Y. <a href="http://www.rooms.com">www.rooms.com</a>	2,400	148	5%	10%	5	<b>&gt;&gt; Rooms! is one of the world's most popular general-interest magazines; it has 100 million readers and is translated into some 300 languages.</b> The IT team participates in activities such as book-offs and trips to ball games and other events. Many IT employees work at home during the morning and afternoon hours, and IT staff collaborate on global projects. Other perks include on-site functional fitness. Employees are connected by an intranet, allowing IT staffers to collaborate on global projects. Other perks include a gym, a canteen, a company store, an on-site dry cleaners, an art gallery and a salon.



## Speaking of Opportunities...

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BEST PLACES  
TO WORK IN IT

Key to Sutter Health's business plan, the role of Sutter Health Information Technology is to make electronic data and communications available to Sutter Health employees, providers and patients to support the health and well-being of the community, enhance patient care and safety, and improve business processes and performance. Information Technology's key approaches to meet these needs consists of the Applications, Telecommunications, Project Management, Web, and Technology.

What sets us apart from all the other companies is the commitment of our employees, each uniquely focused to the care of our patients. We also offer respectful, diverse work environments and continue to embrace technology to improve both the patient and employee experience. And, over the next few years, the entire Sutter Health network will be fully connected to an advanced electronic health record (EHR) system. Not only will this powerful tool ensure better, safer and more efficient health care, it will also enable patients to view their own health histories and test results securely online.

Chosen as one of the Top 100 Best Places to Work in IT by Computerworld Magazine, Sutter Health Information Technology continues to review IT optimization across our affiliates, regions and entire enterprises. We invite you to join us in one of the following opportunities located in Sacramento, CA:

### EPIC Revenue Cycle Implementation Group

- Application Coordinator - Administer
- Application Coordinator - Master File (DMA)
- Application Coordinator - Reimbursement Contracts
- Application Coordinator - Scheduling
- Business Analyst - Hospital Billing Online
- Business Analyst - Workflow Hospital Billing
- Business Analyst - OPTO
- Business Analyst - Registration/Admitting
- Senior Developer
- Technical Analyst I - Report Writer
- Technical Analyst II - Workflow Management
- Technical Developer/Interface Analyst

### RH Electronic Health Record Group

- Application Coordinator - Ambulatory
- Application Coordinator - Clinical Documentation
- Application Coordinator - Orders
- Application Team Coordinator - Pharmacy
- Clinical Practice Model Project Leader
- Senior Business Analyst - EHR Interface
- Senior Technical Analyst

Contact Monica Lunardi, IT Recruiter at  
mlunardi@sutterhealth.org  
or visit our website at  
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Information Technology

*"Pictured above are Sutter Health Information Technology employees."*

# Tools & Training

For most IT workers, a challenging work environment is key to job satisfaction.  
 interesting projects      new technologies      training opportunities

I have access to  
new technologies



Strongly  
agree:  
29%

Agree:  
44%

I have the opportunity to get involved  
with interesting projects



Strongly  
agree:  
34%

Agree:  
49%

I have access to training and  
education to enhance my skills



Strongly  
agree:  
33%

Agree:  
44%

My performance is evaluated fairly  
and with adequate frequency



Strongly  
agree:  
29%

Agree:  
42%

## The Mission Begins With You.

If you're passionate about what you do, committed to excellence, and ready to contribute to a safer, better world, you're ready for MITRE. We are currently seeking talented individuals to join us as we continue to apply our expertise in systems engineering and advanced technology to address issues of critical national importance.

### Current Opportunities:

- Enterprise Architects and Engineers
- Intelligence Systems Engineers
- Information Systems Engineers
- Network and Communications Engineers
- ERP Systems Architect

Apply online at [mitre.org](http://mitre.org), referencing this source code: ADNP. Applicants for these positions may be required to meet eligibility requirements for access to classified information. Only US citizens are eligible for security clearances.

The MITRE Corporation is an equal opportunity affirmative action employer and is committed to diversity in our workplace.

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# MITRE





## Tools & Training

For most IT workers, a challenging work environment is key to job satisfaction. In our survey of Best Places employers, 73% said they have access to **new technologies**, and three quarters said they are given the opportunity to work on **interesting projects**. And 77% said they have the **training opportunities** available to enhance their skills.



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# MITRE



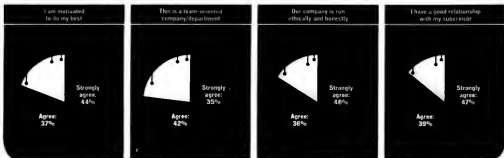


Plenty of IT people cure viruses.  
Ours save lives.

Nemours is proud to be named to ComputerWorld's Top 100 Best Places to Work in IT<sup>®</sup> for the second year in a row. Congratulations to all of our IT Associates, who've made us a leader in children's healthcare innovation, and one of the world's best places to train and work in IT. And thanks to all of our Associates, who used our industry-leading informatics systems to help us care for nearly a quarter of a million children in last year. At Nemours, there are those who take care of patients, and those who take care of the people who take care of patients. And all of them play a critical role in developing best practices in quality and safety, setting national precedents, and most importantly, saving lives.

**Nemours**

[www.Nemours.org](http://www.Nemours.org)



	BEST PLACE	2012 RANKING	2012 REVENUE	2012 EMPLOYEES	2012 EMPLOYMENT INDEX	WHAT'S SPECIAL?	
81	Nationwide Mutual Insurance Co. Columbus, Ohio <a href="http://www.nationwide.com">www.nationwide.com</a>	34,626	4,577	5.7%	12.3%	NA	>> Nationwide offers personal and commercial property and casualty coverage. Its insurance, financial services, professional liability and workers' compensation, and managed health care services, Aflac (stock ownership application last), IT services and other products for the general public and for the business community. These insurance results will be used to determine skills gaps in the department and identify training opportunities to help those gaps. Communication channels include town hall meetings, team lunches and one-on-one meetings. Many IT workers use flexible time to manage their work schedules. Reallocating, part-time schedules and job-sharing options are also offered.
82	OMAC Insurance Holdings Inc. Winston-Salem, N.C. <a href="http://www.omic.com">www.omic.com</a>	2,548	367	7.1%	8.6%	10	>> This financial services subsidiary of General Motors Corp. provides automobile insurance to about 1 million policyholders. IT department drives open communication and involvement in technology. IT employees are allotted a minimum of 10 days of training. GM employees and their families receive discounts on products and services, such as healthcare, automobiles, insurance, books, and internet and cell phone services, through the Family First program.
83	Aetna Inc. Hartford, Conn. <a href="http://www.aetna.com">www.aetna.com</a>	27,543	3,042	8%	7%	3	>> This health insurance company provides coverage to almost 10 million individual policyholders, more than 10 million dental plan members and more than 14 million group insurance members. Aetna uses all major operating systems, applications and infrastructure technologies, giving IT workers a chance to diversify their training and career opportunities. IT employees have access to the results up to five weeks at home technologies. The company offers flexible work schedules, mentoring programs and project rotations. IT workers can receive reimbursement on college tuition up to \$3,000 annual cap.
84	Leidos Inc. Falls Church, Va. <a href="http://www.leidos.com">www.leidos.com</a>	10,005	1,551	3%	3%	5	>> This subsidiary of Boehringer is a publisher of legal, business, government and academic materials, offering more than 30 products to customers via the Web, flat-bed connections, CD-ROMs and printed materials. The company sponsors Employee Spirit, a volunteer committee that organizes health and fitness programs, sports events and athletic tournaments, an annual corporate challenge, road races in conjunction with other local businesses, a "Sustainable Day at the Wright Works" program, religious study and prayer groups, and brown bag lunchtime workshops. The committee also supports a dry-cleaning service and hosts special annual events for employees and their families. Immediately after Hurricane Katrina in 2005, Leidos offered emergency funding to help affected employees pay for shelter, clothing and personal necessities.
85	The George Washington University Washington, D.C. <a href="http://www.gwu.edu">www.gwu.edu</a>	8,000	230	10%	NP	14	>> When it was founded in 1821 as Columbian College, the school had three faculty members, one tutor and 30 students. In 1904, the name of the institution was changed to The George Washington University, and it now enrolls more than 15,000 undergraduates and graduate students annually. The university has been on the cover of <i>Time</i> magazine three times. The school and the degree program they choose. Other benefits include training programs and retirement savings plans with matching contributions.
86	Berlinton Coat Factory Warehouse Corp. Burlington, N.J. <a href="http://www.coat.com">www.coat.com</a>	27,000	243	14%	3%	3	>> This retailer, which sells coats and other apparel, both home, furniture, gifts, jewelry, linen and shoes, was acquired by affiliates of Bain Capital earlier this year. IT employees are offered flexible work schedules, telecommuting options and the chance to work with the latest technology. Workers are rewarded with bonuses, increased responsibility, additional compensation, bonuses and extra time off.
87	Honeywell International Inc. Morristown, N.J. <a href="http://www.honeywell.com">www.honeywell.com</a>	49,603	1,278	5%	10%	5	>> This aerospace company's largest business segment, Honeywell Aerospace, produces such as turbofan and turbo-prop engines and flight safety and landing systems. At 11 career path rotations rotate within each job family, with a 10% IT employee and experienced professionals. Using their career path, IT employees can conduct self-assessments and create learning plans for a current or future role within IT. The group works with Web-enabled commerce applications and a new pilot testing RFID applications. Thanks to advanced collaboration and connectivity tools, employees can telecommute and work flexible hours. AIT groups in Honeywell are now at least Level 3 on the Six Sigma process improvement program.
88	BAE Systems Information Technology McLean, Va. <a href="http://www.baesystems.com">www.baesystems.com</a>	4,410	150	24.3%	10%	5	>> This provider of IT services, subsidiary of BAE Systems PLC, is one of the largest foreign companies in the U.S. defense market, with U.S. headquarters in McLean, Va. Its program managers work 23 days off with flexible holiday pay and a flexible job allocation policy and participation in an employee grant plan. Current employees can change jobs within the company for career advancement or personal and organizational development. Program managers work directly with customers personnel to analyze current, near-term and long-term company staffing needs. So employees involved in projects that are ending experience minimal loss of productivity and personal career disruption.
89	Standard Pacific Corp. Irvine, Calif. <a href="http://www.standardpacific.com">www.standardpacific.com</a>	2,633	89	10%	15%	0	>> The company builds about 8,000 homes annually, mostly in California and Florida, but also in Arizona, North and South Carolina, Colorado, Hawaii and Texas. Employees with one full of service receive a 7% discount on the purchase of a new Standard Pacific home, plus two more months of service. Over 40,000.



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90	Pfizer Inc. New York <a href="http://www.pfizer.com">www.pfizer.com</a>	44,000	800	10%	5	» Pfizer is the world's largest research-based pharmaceutical firm, manufacturing brands such as Viagra, Celebrex, Zolof and Lipitor, as well as over-the-counter remedies Band-Aid and Band-Aid. A new health infrastructure system for employees encourages prevention and proactive health care. Other benefits include coverage for domestic partners, an elder care program and full prescription drug coverage.	
91	Nelson Media Research Inc. New York <a href="http://www.nelsonmedia.com">www.nelsonmedia.com</a>	6,845	400	9%	6	» This media researcher and subsidiary of VMI produces weekly TV ratings based on audience data from randomly selected households. IT employees are given the opportunity to learn and exercise new skills and create a balance between their professional and personal lives. Innovation is encouraged, and new technical challenges are available.	
92	OCLC Online Computer Library Center Inc. Dublin, Ohio <a href="http://www.oclc.org">www.oclc.org</a>	977	336	9.7%	5.6%	4	» Founded in 1967, OCLC Online Computer Library Center is a nonprofit computer library services and research organization. More than 54,000 libraries in 100 countries use OCLC's services to locate, catalog, lend and preserve library materials. Alternative work schedules include flexible hours, compressed workweeks, reduced work hours, sabbaticals and telecommuting. After two years of service, employees can participate in a company-funded retirement plan to which the company contributes 7.5% of an employee's salary. Other benefits include an on-site fitness facility and wellness programs such as health screenings, massage therapy and sabbaticals.
93	Saint Luke's Health System Inc. Kansas City, Mo. <a href="http://www.saintlukes.com">www.saintlukes.com</a>	7,056	118	7.6%	5.7%	16	» Saint Luke's Health System Information Technology is a member of the Saint Luke's Health System, a not-for-profit regional health care system. The IT group usually has positive work with people who have business and clinical experience and teaches them the information systems aspects of their jobs. IT staffers receive personalized education plans related to their professional career development. As a result, new hires in the Apprenticeship program are given input about improvements they would like to see in the IT department.
94	CNA Financial Corp. Chicago <a href="http://www.cna.com">www.cna.com</a>	8,202	1,340	12.1%	5.6%	5	» This insurance provider has surpassed more than 2,000 small for new software development this year, part of a \$1 billion technology investment planned over the next three years. A recent review of all applications that were to be tested, and 17 of those applications have now been outsourced, leaving up the equivalent of 40 full-time employees to work on more important programs. Rewards programs include bonuses and an annual awards ceremony to recognize the achievements of employees. More than 250 staffers received individual and team awards at the 2005 event.
95	MemorialCare Medical Centers Long Beach, Calif. <a href="http://www.memorialcare.org">www.memorialcare.org</a>	8,825	176	5.7%	8.2%	2	» The IT group at this not-for-profit hospital network supports 200 applications on multiple platforms. The group also works with multiple technologies, including storage, clustering, TCP/IP, redundant data centers, virtual LANs, and wireless data and voice networks. The IT organizations diversified, each hospital campus has its own staff with a lead director who reports to the corporate CIO. Committees bring campus employees together in value-added teams, their operations teams and project review groups, sometimes via weekly conference calls.
96	Kennametal Inc. Lafayette, Pa. <a href="http://www.kennametal.com">www.kennametal.com</a>	7,000	101	0%	2%	4	» Kennametal manufactures metal-cutting tools, and mining and highway construction equipment. It also offers engineering services. Training is offered to help employees improve both technical and soft skills. Communication channels for sharing information on major activities within the department include semiannual off-site meetings, a monthly IT newsletter, an IT Web page on the company intranet and periodic group meetings. Many IT employees have traveled to countries such as Germany, England, France, Brazil, China, Japan and India to support SAP implementation projects. A summer off-site meeting includes a day of golf.
97	Charles Schwab & Co. San Francisco <a href="http://www.cschwab.com">www.cschwab.com</a>	14,824	1,320	9%	2.3%	5	» This discount broker serves more than 7 million individual and institutional clients from approximately 270 offices in the U.S. All employees, regardless of level, are eligible for annual bonuses. The company sponsors a 401(k) plan and has a 50% match program for employees' charitable contributions. Employees with five years of service are entitled to a paid four-week sabbatical. The CIO approves employee e-mail within 24 hours and has one-on-one meetings with staffers.
98	Fairfax County Government Fairfax, Va. <a href="http://www.fairfaxcounty.gov">www.fairfaxcounty.gov</a>	11,739	800	12%	9%	4	» Incorporated in 1792, Fairfax County is the most populous jurisdiction in the state of Virginia and the Washington metropolitan area. A program called Framework for Excellence sets employees at all levels of the organization both leadership and performance goals. The benefits package includes a retirement plan. There are 400 hours that employees are required to be in the office. But flexible and compressed work schedules are available based on work needs, with supervisor approval.
99	J.C. Penney Co. Plano, Texas <a href="http://www.jcpenney.com">www.jcpenney.com</a>	143,937	1,174	11.5%	11.8%	16	» J.C. Penney is one of the largest brick-and-mortar, catalog and e-commerce retailers in the U.S. The IT group works with the latest technologies, including .Net and MS2. The average tenure for IT staffers is 14 years. The training program includes more than 2,000 technical courses, 50 general management courses and an online reference library of more than 1,500 e-books. Technical courses are presented weekly. The company's headquarters facility is a 162-million-square-foot complex in a 125-acre site that includes large open spaces, livestock ranching, a service line and walking hall. On-site amenities include a fitness center, a childcare center, health center, a spa, a full-service mall and shopping center, health centers, a cafeteria, coffee shop, retailing shops, retailing facilities and training facilities, including desktop learning studios.
100	Infosys Technologies Ltd. Fremont, Calif. <a href="http://www.infosys.com">www.infosys.com</a>	6,802	6,275	15.4%	8.4%	16	» One of India's top technology consulting firms, Infosys has U.S. headquarters in Fremont, Calif., and operates in more than 16 countries. Infosys benchmarks its compensation packages against those of its closest competitors to ensure that its salaries are competitive. Training and ongoing learning programs focus on technical processes, management and leadership skills. An integrated performance management program helps identify employees' learning needs, and an integrated training program addresses these needs through technical and personal development.

## BEST PLACES TO WORK ADVERTISER INDEX

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Royal Caribbean's IT managers  
are challenged to keep systems humming  
on the ship's 354 IT employees.

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on the ship's 354 IT employees.

# BEST Balance

Dole out sexy technology assignments, yet keep day-to-day systems humming. Avoid the urge to overhire, yet keep up with business growth. Here's how Best Places make everyday balances work.

## TECH FOR THE TECHIE

At Best Places, IT employees jockey for leading-edge technology projects. But who's keeping the lights on?

BY STACY COLLETT

**W**HEN IT COMES to enviable IT assignments, it's hard to beat Adam Grand's job as a project manager at Royal Caribbean Cruises Ltd. (No. 7) in Miami. Grand regularly

travels to Europe to install leading-edge technology on Royal Caribbean's luxury ships. In May, he finished a three-month assignment aboard the *Freedom of the Seas*, the company's newest and largest ship. He installed some of the most advanced technologies ever placed on a cruise ship — wireless and Internet applications, BizTalk tool sets and radio frequency identification (RFID) systems.

"This is just something you don't find yourself [doing] on a daily basis. Your desk becomes the ship. You're out bound to the same location day after day, and the technology is very attractive," Grand explains via satellite phone aboard *Freedom* on its maiden voyage across the Atlantic.

Nice work if you can get it — but what about the other 354 IT employees who stay ashore to keep the systems running? Don't they have any fun?

"It's a challenge," says Gregory Martin, IT manager. "There are definitely some areas [of IT] that people like or don't like," he says, such as maintenance, hardware support and the dreaded after-hours, on-call phone duty.

It's a common concern among IT managers. How does a company expose tech workers to the latest technology while maintaining and improving current systems? These Best Places reveal how they keep the lights on without

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Continued from page 72

dimming IT employees' enthusiasm. Martin has found several ways to appease Royal Caribbean IT workers who are hungry for new technology. The company's Unite program gives all IT employees a chance to earn the coveted shipboard assignments. Staffers are nominated by their managers based on their performance.

"They set up PCs, verify the network is working, and they get out of their normal 9-to-5 for a week and a half," Martin says. Managers regularly post internal messages announcing opportunities to work with new technologies. For instance, the data warehousing team recently sent out a request for IT staffers interested in learning new extract, transform and load tools. Employees also rotate maintenance roles every nine to 18 months to avoid burnout.

"Over the next three years, 30% to 50% of our technology is being upgraded or changed," which will give more employees a chance to engage in new technology, Martin adds.

### The Contest

Financial services firm Sallie Mae (No. 64) in Reston, Va., is moving toward a service-oriented architecture, creating plenty of opportunities for interesting IT work. "The real challenge is balancing [new technology] with our everyday systems and projects," says Jo Lee Hayes, vice president of enterprise technology.

Sallie Mae keeps IT staffers who work on everyday projects engaged in new technology with semiannual contests to solve IT challenges. This year, its 871 IT workers were asked how the IT team could be more agile. Some 120 ideas were submitted, and the top three are being implemented. "It's almost like 'Congratulations! Because you provided your opinion, you now get to work on the solution,'" Hayes jokes.

"That did happen. But in truth... I wanted the opportunity to get to there and see what I could do with it," says Rich Drew, one winner of the contest. Drew, a PC applications analyst, suggested using technology to streamline the installation of operating systems and software on Sallie Mae's 12,000 desktops. "It's not necessarily new technology, but we're... collaborating several technologies that are new to us," he explains.

Drew is now scripting software installs using Microsoft Windows Installer technology to streamline and standardize all PCs. "It's one thing to work on the same thing day after day;

it's another thing to get accomplished at what you do and then try to find ways to make it better," Drew says.

### The Trickle Down

At USAA (No. 17) in San Antonio, the most sought-after IT projects involve the Internet — WebSphere and Java programming. But that doesn't mean they'll stay hot for long. "Legacy is something you implemented yesterday. We have developed organizational discipline that allows employees maximum involvement across technologies," says Greg Schwartz, CIO and senior vice president of enterprise business operations.

So it's no surprise that about half of USAA's 2,223 IT employees actually like the maintenance role, Schwartz says, because leading-edge technology soon trickles down to them.

"Even if you have an old mainframe-style system, now that we're moving toward the Internet, you still have to interact with Java and JSPs," says lead programmer James Karras. "You take those on, then the newer technologies come out, and you still have a base you need to maintain."

### The Difference

It's not just the new technology that motivates IT workers, says Brad Friedman, CIO at Burlington Coat Factory Warehouse Corp. (No. 86) in Burlington, N.J. It's being involved with projects that make a difference.

The apparel company's IT staff is working on several customer-related IT initiatives that include Java, XML communication between various systems, real-time interaction with legacy systems and high transaction volumes. But the IT unit also adds "immense functionality" to the retailer's legacy point-of-sale system, which is written in C, Friedman says.

"It's not just the techie stuff; it's the visibility stuff. Everybody wants to feel part of the company," he explains. "By working on these customer-centric initiatives, they're making a difference in the bottom line. That motivates people."

But electronic data interchange manager Sameh Ayadi adds that new technology motivates her people, too. "If I have a C programmer for 10 years, and I move him to a Java or Linux platform, you see a different path. They're more motivated when they have the most current technology."

Collett is a Computerworld contributing writer. Contact her at [stcollett@aol.com](mailto:stcollett@aol.com).



## BRAIN TRUST

These Best Places keep smart staffers content and secure by feeding their minds and avoiding the urge to overhire.

BY STEVE WELFELDER

"IN SOME form, our IT group has been around for 50 years," says Jean Delaney Nelson, vice president and CIO at Securitan Financial Group Inc. "And we've never laid off an employee."

In a fluid era marked by outsourcing

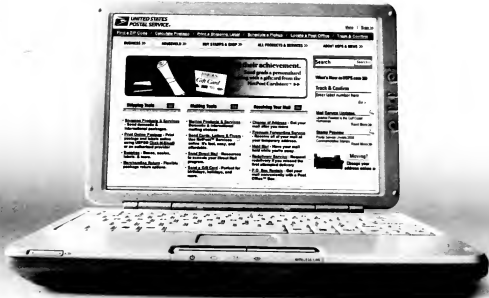
and offshoring, those words are sure to grab the attention of IT professionals. And once St. Paul, Minn.-based Securitan grabs, it hangs on. The financial services firm, which changed its name from Minnesota Life last year, boasts a 97.9% IT retention rate. Small wonder, then, that the 400-worker IT group ranks No. 13 on this year's list.

Interviews with Best Places IT organizations uncover few secrets but much common ground where employee retention is concerned. The keys are careful hiring, a commitment to promoting from within, tireless training and — perhaps most important — challenging projects that offer workers the chance to handle hot technologies. Great benefits don't hurt, either.

### Hiring and Promoting

It's easy to tune out who top executives talk about all the effort they put into hiring the right people. But our research indicates that Best Places companies do more than talk. For example, Securitan says 95% of its present IT staff members were entry-level hires. Coupled with the company's

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**Some companies do huge staff-ups when the economy's strong. We don't. We'd rather move gradually.**

**JUAN DELANEY NELSON**  
VICE PRESIDENT AND CO.  
SECURUM FINANCIAL GROUP INC.

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high retention rate, this stat proves that it promotes extensively from within.

Anna Sullivan has worked at Securum for 12 years. A senior systems analyst, she says the company is tireless when it comes to staying current on technology. "I bet I've taken 50 to 75 training courses here," Sullivan says. Once you've got a sharp worker, one way to keep him is to let him start making decisions right away. That's a tip from San Diego-based wireless vendor Qualcomm Inc., which ranks 23rd on this year's list.

"We push a lot of decision-making down in the organization, so people right out of school get involved," says Norm Feldheim, Qualcomm's senior vice president and CIO. As an example, he recalls how a technology team made up largely of junior staffers approached him in 2004 and suggested that virtualizing the company's servers would ease setup. In response, the CIO approved a \$150,000 evaluation of VMware virtualization products.

"We saw early success, so we kept expanding the program until we ultimately put it in production," Feldheim says. "Now, 50% of our data center is virtual. We've saved over \$3 million on hardware alone, and we can set up a server in 30 minutes." All because some young administrators were intrigued by virtualization's potential.

Hiring managers must also be careful not to underestimate the urge to build an empire when the ladder is full. Securum's Delaney Nelson says this has been a key to her group's ability to avoid layoffs. "Some companies do huge staff-ups when the economy's strong," she says. "We don't. We'd rather move gradually." When Securum needs IT staffing but is unsure for how long, it uses consultants. By the time Delaney Nelson's team replaces a consultant with a full-timer, it's confident that the position will be needed in the long run.

Securum also encourages departments to borrow staffers from one another when one group is busy and

another is slack. This is a reasonably trauma-free option, Sullivan says, because Securum uses a standard set of development tools. She says, "If I move to another group, I know they'll be using the same [IDE] platform" that her group is using now to develop a business-to-business e-commerce Web site for the financial services department.

## Training

Training and ongoing education are part for the course in Best Places IT groups. Interestingly, companies with standout IT retention rates don't boast of offering a hours of training per employee or a dollars for college courses.

Rather, their attitude is best summed up by W.W. Grainger Inc.'s Timothy Ferrarelli. "When we have a job to do and skills people need to learn, we're going to get employees the training they need," says Ferrarelli, senior vice president of enterprise systems at the \$5.5 billion, Lake Forest, Ill.-based supplier of facilities maintenance products, which ranks No. 78. "We don't have a one-size-fits-all rule for training; it's based on company needs."

And because Grainger's business is "all about moving boxes and logistics," as Ferrarelli puts it, the need for training is ceaseless. A few years back, Grainger dove into voice over IP by setting up a network that seamlessly transfers customer calls to any of the company's 400-plus branches.

More recently, Grainger threw the switch on a rollout of SAP AG's enterprise software that SAP executives called, according to Ferrarelli, "one of the largest single-instance implementations ever to go live in one day."

Naturally, a project of that magnitude requires extensive consulting. So, Ferrarelli says, "our bias is to do these things ourselves as much as possible. We want people who understand the business to do the IT work."

Qualcomm's Feldheim echoes that sentiment: "When we use consultants, their job is part knowledge transfer." To that end, he says, "my goal is always to get the consultants out of here before a new system goes into production. It doesn't always happen that way, but it's always the goal."

Because 99% of its IT workers began in the entry level, Securum is also committed to extensive training. In addition to using a corporate educator to learn soft skills such as leadership and communication, the IT organization actually has seven full-time people "who do nothing but train and develop IT associates," Delaney Nelson says. New hires spend their first three

months in an entry-level application-development training program, and the minimal goal is two weeks of ongoing education per staffer per year.

IT groups with great retention records also feature a host of team-building programs and outings, from trips to Major League Baseball games at Qualcomm to visits by the famous Second City improvisational comedy troupe at Grainger. But what these

companies truly provide is nectar to technologists: a challenge.

"We're constantly putting in new technologies where there's a business reason to do so," Feldheim says. "IT people love that challenge—they don't want to be stuck maintaining 30-year-old technologies." ■

*Uffelder is a freelance writer in Southboro, Mass.*

## BUSINESS 101

**Best Places keep staffers' business skills as sharp as their tech smarts with job rotations and mentoring.**

**BY THOMAS HOFFMAN**

**W**HETHER THEY'RE network administrators, IT project managers or LAN specialists, most workers want to feel like they're empowered to make a difference.

For successful IT organizations, that credo attitude is often centered on identifying and understanding the needs of the businesses they support. To do that, this year's Best Places take a multifaceted approach to developing the business knowledge of their IT workers. For many of these companies, such training goes well beyond instructor-led courses.

"We feel the state we've gotten to [as an IT organization] has provided us with a competitive advantage," says Gary Scholten, CIO at Des Moines-based Principal Financial Group Inc., which ranks No. 29 on this year's list. "True innovation happens at the intersection of business and IT. IT has to be the table for that to happen, and IT has to have a certain amount of influence for that to occur."

One of the steps that Principal's IT group has taken to develop its business knowledge is requiring IT workers to

participate in a new job-shadowing program with business staffers. The program, which was launched in late 2005, enables IT workers to learn how each of Principal's financial services businesses operates and how external customers interpret the company's financial products, says Scholten.

One IT staffer at Principal who has benefited from the job-shadowing program is Stacy Hansen. A senior business analyst, Hansen spent time earlier this spring with various business staffers who work with internal and external customers. Among other things, she learned how "those roles interact with each other to meet our business needs and how they impact us in IT," says Hansen, a nine-year company veteran.

Hansen also attended a full-day training session in May to learn more about how the work of Principal's IT staff affects the company's revenues and profits. For instance, this includes identifying priorities in systems changes requested by business managers that ultimately go toward helping those business units meet their strategic goals and helping the company reach its profitability targets, she says.

As with other companies on the 2006 Best Places to Work in IT list, Principal requires its 1,500 IT staffers to create a set of annual career development goals linked to the company's business strategies. Those goals are reviewed quarterly by supervisors.

## Cross-pollination

At Tellabs Inc. (No. 21), business and IT managers work together to identify seminars and conferences that their respective staffs can attend to help encourage a "cross-pollination" of ideas, says CIO Jean Holley. For instance, the Naperville, Ill.-based communications company recently sent a mix of nine IT and business workers to a supply chain management conference to learn more about best practices that they could apply to Telabs' logistics, demand

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high retention rate, this stat proves that it promotes extensively from within. Anna Sullivan has worked at Securix for 12 years. A senior systems analyst, she says the company is tireless when it comes to staying current on technology: "I bet I've taken 50 to 75 training courses here," Sullivan says.

Once you've got a sharp worker, one way to keep him is to let him start making decisions right away. That's a tip from San Diego-based wireless vendor Qualcomm Inc., which ranks 23rd on this year's list.

"We push a lot of decision-making down in the organization, so people right out of school get involved," says Norm Fjeldheim, Qualcomm's senior vice president and CIO. As an example, he recalls how a technology team used up largely of junior staffers approached him in 2004 and suggested that virtualizing the company's servers would ease setup. In response, the CIO approved a \$50,000 evaluation of VMware virtualization products.

"We saw early success, so we kept expanding the program until we ultimately put it in production," Fjeldheim says. "Now, 50% of our data center is virtual. We've saved over \$3 million on hardware alone, and we can set up a server in 30 minutes." All because some young administrators were intrigued by virtualization's potential.

Hiring managers must also be careful not to underestimate the urge to build an empire when the ladder is full. Securix's Delaney Nelson says this has been a key to her group's ability to avoid layoffs. "Some companies do huge staff-ups when the economy's strong," she says. "We don't. We'd rather move gradually." When Securix needs IT staffing but is unsure for how long, it uses consultants. By the time Delaney Nelson's team replaces a consultant with a full-timer, it's coincident that the position will be needed in the long run.

Securix also encourages departments to borrow staffers from one another when one group is busy and

another is slack. This is a reasonably trauma-free option, Sullivan says, because Securix uses a standard set of development tools. She says, "If I move to another group, I know you'll be using the same J2EE platform" that her group is using now to develop a business-to-business e-commerce Web site for the financial services department.

### Training

Training and ongoing education are par for the course in Best Places IT groups. Interestingly, companies with standout IT retention rates don't boast of offering a hours of training per employee or a dollars for college courses.

Rather, their attitude is best summed up by W.W. Grainger Inc.'s Timothy Ferrarelli: "When we have a job to do and skills people need to learn, we're going to get employees the training they need," says Ferrarelli, senior vice president of enterprise systems at the \$5.5 billion, Lake Forest, Ill.-based supplier of facilities maintenance products, which ranks No. 78. "We don't have a one-size-fits-all rule for training: It's based on company needs."

And because Grainger's business is "all about moving boxes and logistics," says Ferrarelli, it's the need for training is ceaseless. A few years back, Grainger dove into voice over IP by setting up a network that seamlessly transfers customer calls to any of the company's 400-plus branches.

More recently, Grainger threw the switch on a rollout of SAP AG's enterprise software that SAP executives called, according to Ferrarelli, "one of the largest single-instance implementations ever to go live in one day." Naturally, a project of that magnitude requires extensive consulting, but, Ferrarelli says, "our bin is to do these things ourselves as much as possible. We want people who understand the business to do the IT work."

Qualcomm's Fjeldheim echoes that sentiment: "When we use consultants, their job is part knowledge transfer." To that end, he says, "my goal is always to get the consultants out of here before a new system goes into production. It doesn't always happen that way, but it's always the goal."

Because 99% of its IT workers begin at the entry level, Securix is also committed to extensive training. In addition to using a corporate educator to learn soft skills such as leadership and communication, the IT organization actually has seven full-time people "who do nothing but train and develop IT associates," Delaney Nelson says. New hires spend their first three

months in an entry-level application-development training program, and the minimal goal is two weeks of ongoing education per staffer per year.

IT groups with great retention records also feature a host of team-building programs and outings, from trips to Major League Baseball games at Qualcomm to leisure by the famous Second City improvisational comedy troupe at Grainger. But what these

companies truly provide is nectar to technologists: a challenge.

"We're constantly putting in new technologies where there's a business reason to do so," Fjeldheim says. "IT people love that challenge—they don't want to be stuck maintaining 30-year-old technologies." ■

*Uffelder is a freelance writer in Southboro, Mass.*

## BUSINESS 101

Best Places keep staffers' business skills as sharp as their tech smarts with job rotations and mentoring.

BY THOMAS HOFFMAN

**W**HETHER THEY'RE network administrators, IT project managers or LAN specialists, most workers want to feel like they're empowered to make a difference.

For successful IT organizations, that can-do attitude is often centered on identifying and understanding the needs of the businesses they support. To do that, this year's Best Places take a multifaceted approach to developing the business knowledge of their IT workers. For many of these companies, such training goes well beyond instructor-led courses.

"We feel the state we've gotten to [as an IT organization] has provided us with a competitive advantage," says Gary Scholten, CIO at Des Moines-based Principal Financial Group Inc., which ranks No. 29 on this year's list. "True innovation happens at the intersection of business and IT. IT has to be at the table for that to happen, and IT has to have a certain amount of influence for that to occur."

One of the steps that Principal's IT group has taken to develop its business knowledge is requiring IT workers to

participate in a new job-shadowing program with business staffers. The program, which was launched in late 2005, enables IT workers to learn how each of Principal's financial services businesses operates and how external customers interpret the company's financial products, says Scholten.

One IT staffer at Principal who has benefited from the job-shadowing program is Stacy Hansen. A senior business analyst, Hansen spent time earlier this spring with various business staffers who work with internal and external customers. Among other things, she learned how "those roles interact with each other to meet our business needs and how they impact us in IT," says Hansen, a nine-year company veteran.

Hansen also attended a full-day training session in May to learn more about how the work of Principal's IT staff affects the company's revenues and profits. For instance, this includes identifying priorities in systems changes requested by business managers that ultimately go toward helping those business units meet their strategic goals and helping the company reach its profitability targets, she says.

As with other companies on the 2006 Best Places to Work in IT list, Principal requires its 1,500 IT staffers to create a set of annual career development goals linked to the company's business strategies. Those goals are reviewed quarterly by supervisors.

### Cross-pollination

At Tellabs Inc. (No. 21), business and IT managers work together to identify seminars and conferences that their respective staffs can attend to help encourage a "cross-pollination" of ideas, says CIO Jean Holley. For instance, the Naperville, Ill.-based communications company recently sent a mix of nine IT and business workers to a supply chain management conference to learn more about best practices that they could apply to Tellabs' logistics, demand

Continued on page 79

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management and planning activities, she says.

Holley also recently restructured Tellabs' IT organization by creating functional teams of business analysts, project managers and other IT workers who have expertise in specific areas such as human resources and supply chain management. "This way, if someone from the business is looking for help in particular area, they'll now know who to go to, and they won't have to ask which of our 224 IT employees can help out," says Holley.

IT executives at Harrah's Entertainment Inc. (No. 22) earlier this year created account teams within the IT organization to support the business requirements of internal customers, much like a sales team would handle a customer account, says Vijay Velamoor, vice president of IT services at the Las Vegas-based gaming and hospitality giant. "Many of the more progressive organizations are moving to this account management model," says Velamoor.

#### A Tighter Bond

Under some circumstances, formal classroom training is not only useful, it's imperative. For example, because Raytheon Co. (No. 32) is a defense contractor, the Waltham, Mass.-based company requires its 2,300-plus IT workers in the U.S. to attend an internal course about return on invested capital to help teach them about which types of expenses are permitted under government projects they're working on, says Vice President and CIO Rebecca Rhoads.

Many of Raytheon's U.S. IT workers are also rotated throughout its seven business divisions once every eight months. The program does more than teach IT workers about Raytheon's businesses, says Rhoads. It also allows them to strengthen relationships with business line managers who run the company's day-to-day operations, she says.

So, if an IT manager is struggling with a problem in Raytheon's aviation business, he can turn to managers he knows in one of the company's other businesses for their feedback and guidance, says Rhoads. "It's been a great way to knit the company together," she says.

Indeed, there's nothing like field experience to provide IT workers with business savvy. But Universal Health Services Inc. (No. 30) in King of Prussia, Pa., takes the concept a step further. UHS regularly sends clinical IT analysts out to its 25 acute-care medical facilities and 97 behavioral health centers to help understand hospital operations, says CIO Linda Reino. But to help increase its knowledge of hospital operations, the IT organization also employs a fair number of IT workers who happen to be registered nurses, she says.

"That's been a very conscious part of the design of the staff, so they are not stuck at headquarters and becoming desensitized to what's happening in the world of the hospital," says Reino.

When asked what type of business skills Reino seeks from her 350-person IT team, "attitude and initiative" leap from her lips. "I've found there isn't much you can't teach in life, and you want people who are self-motivated to find the answers" to business problems, she says.

At Novartis Pharmaceuticals Corp. (No. 38) in East Hanover, N.J., CIO Rob James and the IT leadership team take great pains to ensure that their 400-person IT team is plugged into all of the company's communications,

including executive webcasts and presentations about business goals.

Mentoring is also key at Novartis. All IT employees are eligible to be mentored by a business manager. In fact, one IT manager is currently being mentored by the company's CEO, Alex Gorsky, says James.

In addition, Novartis offers a three-week global IT leadership program. Under the annual program, 30 people spend a week at Harvard University learning management techniques such as effective contract negotiations.

Later in the year, they travel to Novartis offices in Europe for a 360-degree professional assessment of their leadership skills by senior business and IT managers, followed by comprehensive training. The groups spend another week attending technology innovation courses at MIT.

"It's essential that our people on the front line can talk the business language," says James. "To do that, we have to understand the business." ■



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Continued from page 76  
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Developed and maintained databases and reports using Microsoft SQL Server and SAPNET connector for RPT's, RMT's and RDC's. Support SQL Server, MS Exchange, Microsoft Office, and other client/server systems using ASP, ASP.NET, C#, VB.NET, SQL Server, IIS, HTML, SOAP & XML. Formulate and design client server systems using object oriented concepts, scientific analysis & mathematical methods. Document technical design using VISIO & UML. Create relational databases, programs & web sites. 3 yrs exp as Software Engineer responsible for maintenance of @Tech Inc., 33 Wood Ave. So. Ste 400, South NJ 08003. Job loc both NJ or in any unincorporated town in NJ.

**Software Engineer**  
in Comp. Sci. or Info. Tech. & 1 yr exp to install, upgrade & maintain various ASE, Sybase, Informatica, Oracle, MS SQL Server, Oracle DBMS on Solaris/Unix platforms. Build, reconfigure, migrate, maintain, enhance & tune ASE & its infrastructure. Perform database online diagnosis before and after Oracle & Postgres programming. Develop C/C++ application using Java. Part experience on Linux OS. Use @Home, ProShare, DM, Oracle Enterprise Manager, PCAnywhere, MSN's SQL, Redshift, & Excel to provide tech support. Must res. to Open Systems Technologies, 220 W. 34th St., 11th, NY NY 10001. Adv. Oracle Ref. ad #907. Job loc NYC.

**Software Engineer**  
in Comp. Sci. or Info. Tech. & 1 yr exp to install, upgrade & maintain various ASE, Sybase, Informatica, Oracle, MS SQL Server, Oracle DBMS on Solaris/Unix platforms. Build, reconfigure, migrate, maintain, enhance & tune ASE & its infrastructure. Perform database online diagnosis before and after Oracle & Postgres programming. Develop C/C++ application using Java. Part experience on Linux OS. Use @Home, ProShare, DM, Oracle Enterprise Manager, PCAnywhere, MSN's SQL, Redshift, & Excel to provide tech support. Must res. to Open Systems Technologies, 220 W. 34th St., 11th, NY NY 10001. Adv. Oracle Ref. ad #907. Job loc NYC.

**Database Administrator:**  
Wilmington Inc. West Covina, CA. MS req'd. Must resume to: 1900 W. Garvey Ave., Suite 300, West Covina, CA 91790 or e-mail [jaleg@wilmington.com](mailto:jaleg@wilmington.com)

**Programmer Analyst:** needed w/2 yrs exp to analyze, design, develop, implement, test, debug, enhance & modify client server & intranet systems. Must always apply using Visiograph, ASP, ASP, HTML, Oracle, Sybase, SQL Server, MS Access, Crystal Reports Cognos, Business Objects & Res. Must resume to: Global Tel, Inc. 277 Fairfield Rd. Ste #103, Fairfield, NJ 07004. Job loc: Fairfield, NJ or in any unincorporated town in U.S.

**Network Engineer:** Jersey City, NJ and various jobsites nationwide. Competitively specialized for IP monitoring and maintenance supporting Frame Relay, ATM and Voice-over-IP services. Bachelor's in Electronic Communication or Telecommunication engineering and 2 years in job offered. Send resume to: A. C. ITS, 1885 Kennedy Blvd., Jersey City, NJ 07305

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**Job #1 2795300001 - Market Research Analyst** Master's degree with 1 year experience or Bachelor's degree with 3 years experience. Oak Brook, IL job entails and requires experience in researching market conditions for information technology business, gathering information on companies, product sales and methods of marketing and distribution, gathering references and developing customer analysis studies on emerging technologies and checking and validating complex market research surveys.

**Job #1 2795300002 - BI Product Lead** Bachelor's with 5 years experience. Oak Brook, IL job entails and requires experience in working with data warehouse and business intelligence environments, create and obtain support and development activities, installing and repairing the service level agreements, defining the performance parameters for various program requests, managing and collecting resources, coordinating with operations and support team and quality assurance.

**Job #1 2795300003 - Programmer Analyst** Bachelor's with 2 years experience or Associates with 4 years experience or any suitable qualifications. Oakbrook, IL job entails and requires experience in Oracle Applications environment, Supporting Oracle Applications in multiple Oracle databases, Oracle Peoplesoft, General Ledger, Oracle Fixed Assets, PLSQL, Unix Shell scripts, Oracle Forms and Reports, and developing applications.

**Job #1 2795300004 - Sales Manager** Bachelor's degree with 4 years experience or Associates degree with 6 years experience or any suitable qualifications. Oak Brook, IL job entails and requires experience in researching market conditions to determine potential sales, evaluating client needs and coordinating sales, developing management templates, analyzing financial impact of marketing programs, data sourcing sales, advertising, targeting, analyzing sales, financial and profits analysis, gathering business requirements, managing business process modeling and sales and marketing operations. Resumes within USA, candidates Send resumes to: [recruitment@zenith.com](mailto:recruitment@zenith.com) Zenith Technologies, 1455 W. 20th Street, Suite 400 Oak Brook, IL 60022 Please quote Job #1 ID and position without fail.

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8:30am to Noon with Optional Lunch at Noon

## Unlocking the Value of Business Intelligence: Keys to Maximizing Business Performance



### Introduction and Overview

Ron Milton, Executive Vice President, Computerworld



### Business Intelligence Best Practice and Technology Overview

Bill Hostmann, featured Research Vice President, Gartner



### Competing on Analytics

Thomas Davenport, President's Distinguished Professor of Information Technology and Management, Babson College



### Using Technology to Get Better Answers Faster

Keith Collins, Senior Vice President and Chief Technology Officer, SAS



### BI at Pfizer: A Case Study

Denny Segel, Director, Human Health Information Technology, Pfizer Global Pharmaceuticals Division, Pfizer, Inc.

**Optional Luncheon and Presentation: Making BI a Success - Getting the Edge**  
Bill Hostmann, featured Research Vice President, Gartner



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Continued from page 1

## Microsoft Live

think their companies will take advantage of the services in the next couple of years—or if they ever will.

"I'm very skeptical," said Justin Smith, a Buffalo, N.Y.-based senior messaging and collaboration administrator at Sodebo Inc. Smith said the food and management services company's IT department is accustomed to delivering a certain level of technical support that he isn't sure an outside vendor could reliably match. "I believe in having assets internal rather than external, if it's a cost wash or similar," he added.

But Ozzie's name alone carried enough credibility for David Porc, a software engineer at Progressive Casualty Insurance Co. in Mayfield Village, Ohio, to at least give the services pitch consideration. Porc said he has been impressed with Ozzie since he gained fame as the author of Notes at Lotus Development Corp. Ozzie later founded Groove Networks Inc., which Microsoft acquired last year.

### Blended Offering

Not surprisingly, Microsoft isn't suggesting that IT departments make a wholesale switch from packaged software to online services. Ozzie said the company recognizes that the transfor-

mation will occur over a period of years. Microsoft is taking, "a very pragmatic approach," blending desktop and server software with a set of its own enterprise service offerings, plus others, provided by business partners, he noted. That will enable IT managers to "make the right trade-offs" for their companies, he said.

Ozzie and other Microsoft executives cited several examples of services that might appeal to corporate IT managers. An IT department could offload e-mail to Microsoft's Exchange Hosted Services. Windows Live Search, which is in beta testing, will allow end users to bring together in a single query information from their

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PCs, Microsoft's SharePoint collaboration software, enterprise applications and the Internet.

In addition, Ozzie noted that Microsoft plans to federate its Windows Live identity service with Active Directory to enable authenticated users to access a vast array of Internet-based services without having to create a separate identity for each one. His keynote speech made use of Microsoft's Windows Live Virtual Earth mapping technology to trace his employment roots in a display so detailed that attendees could see the colors of buildings where he used to work.

Joe Zinn, a Tulsa-based senior IT developer at American Electric Power Co., said the Virtual Earth technology could help the utility's service technicians as they respond to calls. But like other users, Zinn said he harbors doubts about services such as hosted Exchange, especially as a company as geographically dispersed as AEP, which is based in Columbus, Ohio, and has 5 million customers in 11 states.

"Utilities tend to be conservative, so I company executives would have to be convinced that there's a good return on it," Zinn said.

Andy Gorman, a senior technologist at a major financial institution, said Microsoft's services vision had a "pie in the sky" feel to him. "It's good in concept," he said. "I just can't see it being implemented in the next 10 years, and I don't think many companies are ready for it. They wouldn't buy it culturally."

Many users also would be

on pins and needles over concerns about information security and a lack of control over their data, he said.

But Garner Inc. analyst Daryl Plummer said such concerns are peripheral and have yet to stop any Web-based, service-oriented architecture or software-as-a-service efforts from going forward. Plummer, in fact, said he thinks Microsoft will have to move further away from software infrastructures than it is now, and toward services.

Microsoft's own software licensing scheme is paving the way toward broader adoption of online services, said the chief technology architect at a major food-processing company. Many Microsoft users already pay a yearly software fee, noted the architect, who asked not to be identified. Shifting to a services model is the next step, he said.

But some TechEd attendees still had trouble getting their arms around the new approach that Ozzie laid out. "I can't relate to what they're doing," said Tyrone Boyd, associate director of network services at Howard University in Washington. "It just doesn't register with me yet."

## Correction

**A STORY ON business intelligence applications in the April 3 issue's News section ("SAS Touts Its Integration," "Storage Tools for BI Projects") conveyed a misleading impression of the goals of marketing changes made by Post River Resort in Cherokee, Miss., after Hurricane Katrina struck the Gulf Coast last August. John Enriquez, vice president of IT at Post River, said the casino operator used SAS Institute Inc.'s software to adjust its marketing plan in order to account for an influx of customers who previously had gone to casinos in hard-hit areas of Mississippi and Louisiana.**

## Microsoft CIO Splits Time Between IT, Hosted Services

BYSTEVEN

As CIO and vice president of managed solutions at Microsoft, Ben Marmerbach is responsible for the company's internal IT operations and for delivering IT services to customers. Emergent Holdings Inc. last year became the first user to connect with Microsoft for remote desktop management, messaging and collaboration services, XL Capital Ltd., an insurance and financial services firm, has also signed a managed services deal, according to Marmerbach. During an interview with Computerworld at TechEd 2006 last week, Marmerbach discussed Microsoft's Internet-based services vision for corporate IT. Excerpts follow:

**Why do you offer "managed solutions?"** The reason we're doing this isn't so we can make this big business but so we can make sure our products work great in a managed and hosted environment. It's really more for product learning. If you think of my organization at Microsoft, it's really more of a product development organization than a typical IT organization.

**Ray Ozzie talked at TechEd about extending the "Live" services vision to corporate IT. What does that vision mean for you?** A lot of what we're doing is getting the products and solutions in place so corporate IT could subscribe to a partner running these services for them or run it themselves. That's one.

The other, you have to look at in three categories. One, you have the IT cloud, which is consumer-based—Hotmail, MySpace, that type of stuff. Managed IT is the other extreme, which would be the managed desktop, managed Exchange (e-mail), managed collaboration. And then there's a middle one that I would call unmanaged IT. That would be sold more to departments or for temporary usage.

Collaboration is a great example. On managed IT, you would have hosted SharePoint (with) a three-year contract and a certain (service-level agreement) for a certain price. And then, with unmanaged IT, you really buy hosted SharePoint on a monthly basis or on the basis of a project. You pay for it by the number of users. And then you can term-



note it whenever you want.

**To what degree do you offer these services now?** With the cloud, we have Windows Live. If you look at Office Live, a lot of that is unmanaged IT. You as a small business owner or as a person running a project can subscribe to Office Live and have a site set up for you. For managed IT, you should look at managed solutions.

**Like Emergent and XL Capital did?** Right. They're the only two paying, public customers. We have other customers we're talking to. We're really in product development mode—we started this not even two years ago. And if you think of the product development life cycle, "not even two years" is fairly early.

**Do you view the services model as a sea change for IT?** It's going to be over time. But I think that's a great thing. With any CIO, a lot of what they would run as a service, they wouldn't consider strategic. Then you as an IT organization can focus your resources on what you consider more strategic and more unique to your company.

—CAROL SLIWA

CRISTIAN FORNATTA

PHOTOGRAPH

BPA IBM



Continued from page 1

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**Tim McGraw and Faith Hill's Neighbor's Keeper Foundation  
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If this year's benefit and special performance were more intimate, your table would be the stage. Please support Tim McGraw and Faith Hill at Tavern on the Green on June 22<sup>nd</sup> to help the Neighbor's Keeper Foundation which provides funding for the purchase of goods and services designed to directly impact those in need. Other charities in Samsung's Four Seasons of Hope that are dedicated to helping those in need are proudly led by Joe Torre, Boomer Esiason, Dan Marino, Jon Bon Jovi, Rudy Giuliani, Arnold Palmer, Wayne Gretzky and Magic Johnson. To find out how to donate or to attend this once in a lifetime intimate event, visit [www.fourseasonsofhope.com](http://www.fourseasonsofhope.com) or email [tskhinnwale@comcast.net](mailto:tskhinnwale@comcast.net).



**NEIGHBOR'S KEEPER  
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FRANK HAYES ■ FRANKLY SPEAKING

# Best Places Secret

**E**ITHER YOU GET IT OR YOU DON'T. That's the open secret about the Best Places to Work in IT (see stories starting on page 27). Either you understand that being a great place to work is a competitive business advantage or you still think it's a luxury your company can't afford in a competitive business world.

If you're nodding your head right now, you get it. If you're about to turn the page, hold on. You still have a chance to figure out the secret.

Here's a hint: It's not really about what you do for your IT workers. It's about what they do for the business — and why.

Chances are, you think the way to create a great place to work is to make your employees happy. You also think the best way to make employees happy is to reward them generously. That means a hefty salary, a good benefits package, maybe profit sharing or stock options. That can get expensive, but it's necessary if you want to compete for the best IT talent.

In other words, you believe IT workers' satisfaction carries a cost that you'll get some benefit from. That's perfectly logical. But it's a gamble, not a secret to success.

And it's no sure thing. All that cost is just wasted if you're IT people can't wait to get out the door at the end of the day. If your IT shop is merely a lucrative place to have a job, not truly a great place to work, that gamble will never pay off.

See, you're thinking about it backward. Don't start with the cost. Begin by considering something that always tops the list of what we're supposed to be doing: aligning IT with the business.

How do you achieve that? It's not enough to do ROI calculations and get business sponsors for every IT project. No, the way you line up IT with the business is by making sure your IT people are lined up with the business.

They have to see what the business does and understand how the products move and where the money comes from. If they've got to watch users solving business problems, listen to salespeople dealing with customers and understand how the products move and where the money comes from.

If you can show them that — and ways to get them connected to the business, committed to the business — they'll no longer think of themselves as just being in IT. They'll be in insurance or banking, retail

or manufacturing, pharma or transportation, or whatever industry your company is in.

That's when they stop struggling against the incomprehensible demands of those @\$\$% business-side people and start meeting and even anticipating those business needs.

When IT people are engaged with the business, when they see how it fits together and recognize that they're not just slinging code and stringing wires but making a real impact — that's when they're not just working to succeed at IT projects. They're working to succeed at business.

And when it all makes sense, when IT people know they're making business happen, they're a lot more satisfied. And that makes their IT shop a great place to work — at the same time they're turning IT into a value generator in the business, not just a cost center.

Now that's a competitive advantage.

The salaries, the perks, the benefits, the flexibility, the training, the opportunities — yeah, you need all those. And when IT is delivering the goods because IT's people are tightly aligned with the business, it's not hard to make the case that these aren't luxuries. They're just good support for people who are driving success in the business.

That's the secret. Get it? Good. Now help yourself to the ideas from this year's Best Places to Work in IT. They're not just tips on which benefits 27,000 IT people like best. They're also ways of engaging IT people with the business so they like their jobs, too.

Just remember: This isn't about doing things to make your IT people happy.

It's about creating a place where IT people are happy making your business a success. ■



**FRANK HAYES**, Computerworld's senior news columnist, has covered IT for more than 20 years. Contact him at [frank@computerworld.com](mailto:frank@computerworld.com).

## The Ones They Stole, Right?

There's an overnight break-in at this company, and the thieves steal the servers and a box of mobile phones. "We all come into the work, the network is down, and a few detectives are mulling about, so we wait around for the word to go home," says a pilot fish there who decides to spend the time going over some work that's already on his hard drive. "After a few minutes, one bright spark comes over to tell me I shouldn't be using my computer," fish reports. "She said the police were investigating the theft — and I might corrupt some evidence on the servers."

### Shark

Pilot fish's manager forgets he approved fish's vacation, so when fish returns, his big boss calls him in. Why didn't you tell anyone you'd be gone? boss asks. Fish says he'll forward the vacation approval and points out that his vacation was approved, his automatic e-mail out-of-office message and his electronic calendar all showed his vacation. Says fish, "My boss smiled sarcastically and said, 'Yes, but you didn't leave a yellow sticky on your door, so how could we know you were on vacation?'"

### SHARK TANK

delates the content, enters the new content and saves it over the old one. Thankfully, she has paper copies."

### Yes, It's Normal

This organization is negotiating to unlock smart-card-based network log-ons, so employees pilot fish has been visiting some "workstations" to configure them for using the smart cards. "After visiting one user, I received an e-mail from her," fish says. "She asked, 'I have found that I have to be logged on to send e-mail in this network?'"

### Poetry in Motion

"There's a bug in my monitor," executive writes as he calls in IT pilot fish for help. Some sort of professional fish wonders, Or a virus? "A tiny eight-legged bug appeared to be walking rapidly across his LCD, like something out of an old-time video game," fish says. Fish grabs another laptop and plugs the buggy screen into it. "It's still there," sighs fish. "There's a real bug trapped inside his display. Poetic justice."

**SHARKY** thanks you for the info. Send it to me by e-mail at [sharky@computerworld.com](mailto:sharky@computerworld.com). You'll snag a virtual Shark when I can it. And check out Sharky's blog, [www.sharkyblog.com](http://www.sharkyblog.com), and stop by for Shark Tank items delivery at [computerworld.com/sharky](http://computerworld.com/sharky).



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**SAS**  
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Bringing your best minds together will be what sets you apart.

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DATA INTEGRATION

INTELLIGENCE STORAGE

BUSINESS INTELLIGENCE

ANALYTICS

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